



*Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond*  
**October 30 – November 6, 2015**

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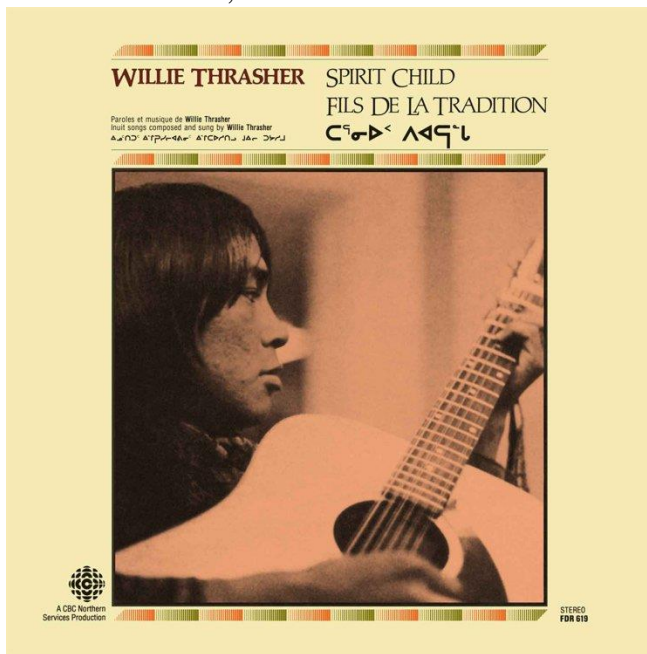
# Aboriginal Arts & Culture

## Willie Thrasher

### Spirit Child

By [Clint Burnham](#)

Published Oct 30, 2015



Last year's *Native North America* compilation of First Nations folk and rock stood as one of 2014's best reissues. Put together by veteran crate-digger Kevin "Sipreano" Howes, *NNA* brought many singers and bands from the '60s and '70s to a new audience — native and non — and left many of us wanting more. That's exactly what we get with *Spirit Child*, a Light in the Attic reissue of Willie Thrasher's 1981 LP.

Thrasher was born in the Northwest Territories in 1948, still makes a living busking in Nanaimo, BC, and plays regularly in Vancouver (including at last summer's Levitation festival), so it's a real bonus to be able to hear what he was doing over 30 years ago.

Recorded at a commercial studio in Ottawa (and reissued with the original *CBC* album design), *Spirit Child* is an amazing record for how it bridges country-folk styles — slack string and steel guitar, vocals reminiscent of Neil Young but outlaw country tinges that recall the likes of Waylon and Willie — and traditional Inuvialuit concerns. So, we have songs about whaling ("Shingle Point Whale Camp"), Inuit arts and crafts ("Old Man Carver") and a couple of tunes in Inuvialuktun and English ("Old Man Inuit" and "Silent Inuit").

These last two — sort of a talking blues call-and-response — are, like many of Thrasher's songs, no doubt a response to his years in residential schools in the 1950s, where native children were forbidden to speak their own language and, in Thrasher's case, had their long hair cut.

But it's Thrasher's musical artistry — and even weirdness — that makes this record hold up all these decades later. Dubbed "Aboriginal psych folk" by the label, Thrasher's twang reaches its pinnacle with the gem "Wolves Don't Live by the Rules," a song that wouldn't be out of place in the heyday of '90s alt-country (David Berman and the Silver Jews, anyone?). Like *Spirit Child* as a whole, "Wolves" steps into your brain and just won't leave. ([Light In The Attic](#))

**Direct Link:** [http://exclaim.ca/music/article/willie\\_thrasher-spirit\\_child](http://exclaim.ca/music/article/willie_thrasher-spirit_child)

## Edmonton TV series Blackstone premières fifth and final season

[Fish Griwkowsky, Edmonton Journal](#)

Published on: November 1, 2015 | Last Updated: November 1, 2015 1:00 PM MST

Kidnapping, alcoholism, buried bodies, violence against women — all bad things must come to an end.

But as locally produced [Blackstone](#) kicks open its fifth and final season with a giant f-bomb, the seething melodrama balances its ample despair with moments of humour, community, redemption and hope.

Just don't hold your breath on a happy ending for everyone involved. One of Blackstone's great strengths is its acid-scarred realism, portrayed grittily by a terrific cast, including Steven Cree Molison, Carmen Moore, Eric Schweig and Michelle Thrush. Not to mention Ashley Burnham — currently Mrs. Universe — returning to the show this season after a two-year hiatus.

Filmed in and around Edmonton by Prairie Dog Film + Television, running on APTN (Aboriginal Peoples Television Network) and Showcase, with a second run on CBC, the show's creator Ron E. Scott describes his fourth and most awarded series. "Blackstone is a raw, authentic, one-hour drama on the power and politics and everyday life on a reserve on the Prairies. And how the people on reserves interact with the city, with a lot of non-native characters: doctors, Child and Family Services, the police."

Compared to the cautious way aboriginal life is often written for TV, Scott laughs: "Blackstone's goal was to rip the carpet up." Stories involved addiction, leadership

corruption, homelessness, systemic racism and the embarrassingly low availability of drinking water on reserves.

So why is Blackstone ending?

“It’s a great question,” Scott says in his office/production studio, in the Film Alberta building where SCTV was made in the ’80s. “The broadcaster came to me when we were shooting Season 4 and said, ‘We want to do Season 5. Tell me why you want Season 6.’ I thought, ‘We’ve done so much — what else is there to do? We’ve hit the major hot buttons.’

“What it came down to is Blackstone was built a certain way, and after five seasons the production model was a challenge because of escalating costs in a full union shop. Everyone in Canadian television knows how tight it is. And it was time to move on. There are more stories to tell, new worlds.

“Knowing it was the end, obviously there were some things I wanted to do, that I hadn’t said in the previous four years. The series finale has a lot of interesting moments, and there are things left open, just like there are in life. Life goes on.

“And,” he adds, “life doesn’t go on.”

The series finale will air Dec. 22.



Blackstone creator Ron E. Scott

One of the show’s signatures is its willingness to let aboriginal characters be flawed, even villainous. “The show was always designed that we’re not going to shy away from the realities, which a lot of shows do because it steps over boundaries. Being part native, I grew up and saw a lot of stuff. I played hockey on reserves; friends of mine still live on reserves. A lot of the actors come from there. You have this core group of people who understand that world.

“Showcase (network) would get on the phone and say, ‘You can’t do that!’ But we’d get on the phone with APTN and say, ‘This is true! It’s really happening!’

“Blackstone pushed the reality envelope, the raw. And when you do that, you’re able to have things that are real, not big budget ... We couldn’t go to the moon, you know? We couldn’t even shoot in West Edmonton Mall.”

Season 5 will tackle the topic of missing aboriginal women, a controversial issue that helped defeat the Harper government. Says Thrush, who thinks she’ll one day run for office: “I don’t remember in my lifetime a prime minister who was so hated. I’m actually sort of grateful because he put a fire under indigenous people’s asses. We really rose up to the occasion.”

Scott explains: “Both the Rinelle Harper and the Tina Fontaine story really touched me. I wanted to build an arc on the commentary and the narrative really focusing in on, ‘Who are these girls, what happened and why did it happen?’ We don’t answer all those questions, but we present it in a dramatic thread.”

Scott thinks the show’s popularity — including being well-loved in Australia and New Zealand — is as much about the people as the setting. “It was all about the human element, universal stories. Someone might watch and go, ‘I’m not native, but my aunt was an alcoholic so I get that’.”

Thrush won a Gemini for her portrayal of Gail Stoney, a good person often consumed by her addictions. “It’s one of the most interesting arcs in the whole show,” she says. “It was an absolute gift as an actor. Last season she had it really rough, OD’d — and died. This season she’s back on track again.



Gail Stoney (Michelle Thrush) on Blackstone. supplied

“It’s hard to even talk about,” Thrush says, her voice breaking, “because I am so close to my character. So, oh my gosh, I’m trying to say this without crying, on the last day when they clapped for Carmen (Moore) and myself and the people in that scene, we just burst into tears. There was so much trust between those two characters, and love. Oh, it was hard.”

Scott smiles, thinking of the last few days of shooting over the summer. “There were some moments where I realized we’re not going to do this again. I put on a pretty good face.

“At the same time, the last five seasons have been just a dream, to be able to write, direct and finish the show. But it’s OK to let the characters go. I’m developing another series right now and I don’t find that I’m pulling them over from Blackstone.”

One of Scott’s new projects also focuses on the missing women. Thrush, meanwhile, is filming a sci-fi called Northlander, set 2000 years from now, being produced in southern Alberta.

Scott stresses that one of the most important factors in the series’ success was the crew and cast from all over Alberta. “We had people make choices to work on Blackstone and not on bigger shows.

“We do have some great resources in Alberta, and especially Edmonton, people helping us, these great pockets of inspiration. And it’s something I never want to overlook.

“People in Toronto are still asking, ‘How the hell did you do it?’”

## **PREVIEW**

Blackstone Season 5 première

APTN West, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 11 p.m.

**Direct Link:** <http://edmontonjournal.com/entertainment/television/edmonton-tv-series-blackstone-premieres-fifth-and-final-season>

## **Film pays tribute to Inuit artist**

By [Lynn Desjardins](#) | [english@rcinet.ca](mailto:english@rcinet.ca)

Monday 2 November, 2015



Kenojuak Ashevak was influenced by the landscape and lifestyle she lived in Cape Dorset. © CBC

Canadians will soon know more about the late aboriginal artist Kenojuak Ashevak and how her work influenced the art coming from the north.



A film crew recently went to her home land of Cape Dorset in the northern territory of Nunavut to film a 60-second [Heritage Minute](#).

These short films have been made since 1991 by a non-profit group now called [Historica Canada](#), dedicated to informing Canadians about their history. The shorts are viewed on television and in movie theatres.



The artwork of Kenojuak Ashevak became famous around the world. © CBC

### **First Heritage Minute translated into Inuktitut**

This is will be the first Heritage Minute to be translated into [Inuktitut](#), the languages of the Inuit people. The film shorts are produced in English and in French, Canada's two official languages.

While this is not the first Heritage Minute to illustrate Inuit culture, is the first to be filmed in Canada's North in 20 years. The film's producer felt it was important to film in the area to better understand how Ashevak was influenced by the landscape and the lifestyle she lived in Cape Dorset.

Ashevak's family members will also be characters in the film.



The Enchanted Owl was Ashevak's most famous print and was featured on Canadian postal stamps. © CBC

### **A pioneer of Inuit art**

Ashevak is considered a pioneer of Inuit art, and one who influenced other aboriginal artists.

The National Gallery of Canada owns about [50 of her works](#), including her most famous print, *Enchanted Owl*.

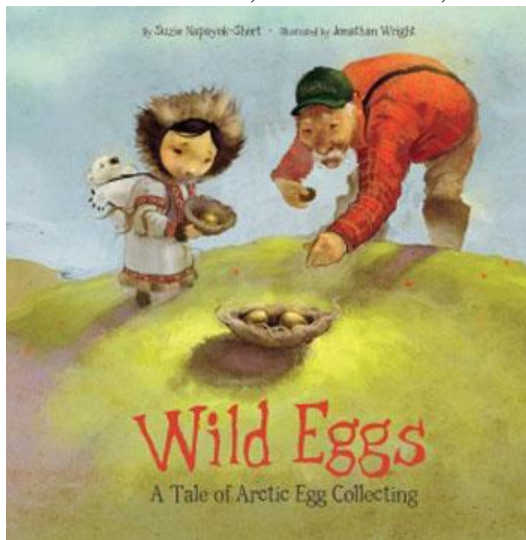
She was born in 1927 and died at home in Cape Dorset in 2013.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.rcinet.ca/en/2015/11/02/film-pays-tribute-to-inuit-artist/>

## **New children's book inspires Inuit, north and south, to enjoy the land**

**"It's a different kind of wealth"**

SARAH ROGERS, November 03, 2015 - 9:30 am



The new children's book *Wild Eggs: a tale of Arctic egg collecting* was published and released by Inhabit Media in October. (IMAGE COURTESY OF INHABIT MEDIA)



Originally from Iqaluit, Suzie Napayok-Short is an interpreter and translator living in Yellowknife. (PHOTO COURTESY OF TUSAAJIIT)



Suzie Napayok-Short often thinks about life through the perspective of Akuluk, a young Inuk girl who lives in a southern city.

Akuluk is a fictional character, but one Napayok-Short knows well; while she was born and raised in Nunavut, for 26 years she's made her home in Yellowknife, where she works as an interpreter and translator.

Many of her Nunavut schoolmates followed a similar path — marrying and raising their families in the South.

On a trip to Whale Cove to visit her parents years ago, Napayok-Short's father took her egg collecting on a nearby island well-known for its bird colony.

She was struck by what fun the outing was: a traditional Inuit activity that hasn't changed over time.

So she returned home and wrote the story down, from the viewpoint of a young girl named Akuluk, who visits her grandparents in Nunavut for the first time.

Four years later, Inhabit Media published the children's story: *Wild Eggs: a Tale of Arctic Egg Collecting*, Napayok-Short's first book, illustrated by Iqaluit artist Jonathan Wright.

In the book, released earlier this month, Napayok-Short said she is portraying mainly Inuit families she knows, who maintain distant but valued connections with Nunavut, or the North's other Inuit regions.

"[Egg collecting] is still a tradition practiced there. It's just when you live in a city you don't think about those things," she said.

"The main thing is that we have to respect our environment, the land, the birds and the wildlife."

In *Wild Eggs*, Akuluk visits her grandparents in Nunavut for the first time.

She's skeptical about the trip, but when she arrives, her grandparents take her to Munnilik, or the place that has eggs, where thousands of eiders, geese and mergansers fill the sky.

In the early summer, the island is covered in nests made of down and filled with different coloured eggs, a sight that fills Akuluk with awe.

Akuluk's grandfather explains the "rules" for collecting eggs: only take from nests with four eggs or fewer. Other nests must remain untouched to allow baby birds to hatch.

Back at home, eggs are tested in a pot of water. Eggs that float to the top can only be used for cooking, ones that stay at the bottom are best for eating and cooking.

Those are the ways Inuit have collected eggs for centuries, Napayok-Short said, in an effort not to disrupt the natural cycle.

“Every time I visit the North, the elders tell me that young people don’t follow the traditional ways, which were sustainable,” she said.

“[For example] you don’t shoot the first caribou in a herd; it will scare away the others. This generation now shoots as many caribou as they can.”

Her message for readers, young and old, Inuk and non-Inuit: take advantage, but take care of our natural surroundings.

“If you want to enjoy your environment, it’s up to you to respect it,” she said. “I want today’s children to leave their computers and go outside and have fun.

“It’s a different kind of wealth.”

That’s how Akuluk sees it now, Napayok-Short said, and she hopes to travel back to Nunavut soon.

You can purchase a copy of “Wild Eggs” in both English and Inuktitut at Arctic Ventures in Iqaluit, in English at most major booksellers or online at Amazon.ca.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674new\\_childrens\\_book\\_encourages\\_inuit\\_north\\_and\\_south\\_to\\_enjoy\\_the\\_land/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674new_childrens_book_encourages_inuit_north_and_south_to_enjoy_the_land/)

## **Kôna trailer teases a supernatural mystery in the Canadian north**

Andy Chalk Nov 1, 2015

There are plenty of videogames made in Canada, but videogames set in Canada are a rare beast. Kôna looks like it will be one of them: It appears on the surface to be a vaguely [Ethan Carter](#)-esque investigative adventure, but it's set in 1970 in Atamipek Lake, a small village in the Great White North that's caught up in a dispute between the local Cree community and wealthy industrialist W. Hamilton.

Hamilton claims members of the Cree community have vandalized and robbed his summer home; the Cree say Hamilton is destroying sacred lands just to make a buck. You, as Korean War veteran turned private investigator Carl Faubert, agree to

investigate—but Hamilton fails to meet you as planned when you arrive. And he's not the only one who's missing—the whole village appears to be deserted.

The trailer doesn't provide much insight into what Kôna is about beyond that very basic setup, nor how it will play, but the description at [Konagame.com](http://Konagame.com) says it "combines the atmosphere and immersion of a modern survival title with the deep storytelling and puzzle-solving aspects of a traditional adventure game." The [Steam Greenlight page](#) reveals more: The emphasis is on exploration and investigation, but survival will be an issue as well, as players will have to deal with both "unexpected threats" and the harsh weather conditions. There will also be a [Wendigo](#).

"While we can't say why it exists (to avoid spoilers), a Wendigo roams in the game," the developers wrote. "We have to make it clear though that this awesome half-beast is not there to cause useless jump scares (Kôna IS NOT a [Slender](#)-Like)."

Color me intrigued, as they say. The plan is to release Kôna over four episodes, each running one to two hours in length, with the first set to come out in January 2016. And because I know you're curious, Kôna, according to the [Online Cree Dictionary](#), means "snow."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.pcgamer.com/kona-trailer-teases-a-supernatural-mystery-in-the-canadian-north/>

## U of S Aboriginal theatre program a first

The StarPhoenix November 3, 2015



The University of Saskatchewan has launched Canada's first Aboriginal theatre program.

The wîchêhtowin Aboriginal Theatre Program is a two-year certificate program offered by the Department of Drama that trains students for careers in theatre, television, film and related industries. In Cree, wîchêhtowin means "we live together in harmony; we help each other; we are inclusive."

The first group of eight students began the 30-credit program this fall. U of S assistant professor Carol Greyeyes, an award-winning actor, writer and director, co-ordinates the new program. She wanted to design a learning environment that would help students build confidence and express themselves while also affirming their identities as Aboriginal people.

“We’re trying to create a strong circle of support where our students feel they belong,” Greyeyes, a member of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, said in a release.

The class stays together for the two-year program. They learn acting, traditional dance, set design and stage management as a group. At the end, they present their own new work of theatre.

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/aboriginal+theatre+program+first/11488988/story.html>

## **Aboriginal Community Development**

### **Inuit heritage org plans replica of Thule whalebone house for Iqaluit**

**Full-scale re-creation of Thule dwelling should be ready by fall 2016**

STEVE DUCHARME, November 02, 2015 - 2:00 pm



This site by the near the head of the Apex Trail is a possible location for a full-scale replica of a Thule whalebone and sealskin house that the Inuit Heritage Trust wants to create in Iqaluit by 2016. (PHOTO COURTESY OF IHT)



This site at Crystal II is another possible location for a replica of a Thule dwelling that the Inuit Heritage Trust wants to create in Iqaluit. (PHOTO COURTESY OF IHT)



The site of an ancient qammaq at Crystal II near Iqaluit. (PHOTO COURTESY OF IHT)

A new building will soon add its modest profile to the Iqaluit cityscape, but this cozy dwelling will be made from traditional materials such as sealskin and whalebone — plaster whalebone, that is.

The Inuit Heritage Trust wants to complete a full-scale replica of a Thule dwelling by fall 2016 within walking distance of Nunavut's capital, at one of two sites they're currently considering.

They hope that the roughly two-metre high house — a semi-circular ring of bowhead jawbones covered in blankets of sealskin — will become a gathering point for members of the local Inuit community to explore their heritage.

"We will install interpretive signs that will talk about the history of Thule and Dorset culture, the history of Iqaluit, and we will also encourage organizations to host events that are related to Inuit knowledge," said the Thule house project manager, Torsten Diesel.

The Thule, the ancestors of today's Inuit, followed warming Arctic temperatures to [migrate east from Alaska](#) across the continent as far as Baffin Island and Greenland, venturing as far north as the Nares Strait dividing Ellesmere Island from Greenland.

As the Thule spread out, they incorporated the existing Dorset culture that inhabited the eastern Arctic — replacing them completely by about 1500 CE.

While much larger Thule camps are found elsewhere, Iqaluit still holds a special place in Inuit pre-history.

One of the proposed site locations for the Thule house project is next to an ancient and unique Thule foundation — dubbed the “Crystal II” archeological site.

Crystal II was the first archaeological site to contain both Thule and Dorset artifacts, giving archaeologists their first opportunity to lay relics side by side and distinguish between the two cultures.

“Since they found both Thule and Dorset artifacts, it even predates 1,000 years ago,” Diesel said.

The Inuit Heritage Trust has another site in mind too — the Apex trail-head just past the old cemetery in Iqaluit — and plans to choose a site within the next few months.

“I had presentations with the city before the election and there was lots of verbal support for the project. I’m hoping to pick up discussions from there and see if the new council is equally in support,” Diesel said.

Consultation with the community, he said, is essential for a project like this to be successful.

“I’d like to interview elders about life in the area, about their knowledge of old dwelling structures, their knowledge about building houses like that,” said Diesel.

Should the project get the green light, the Inuit Heritage Trust plans to hire local hunters to harvest the seals, and local seamstresses to sew the roof, prepare the skins and collect heather for insulation.

While construction costs for the house are small, Diesel has larger plans to integrate the Thule house into Nunavut’s heritage network, or maybe even contribute to it.

The Inuit Heritage Trust plans to host a workshop at the completed Thule site for heritage workers from across Nunavut to study the project and brainstorm projects which could fit their own communities’ heritage and budget.

Infrastructure around the house will be upgraded with boardwalks and signage for visitors.

The final cost for this project, Diesel believes, will come in at just over \$400,000.

Most of the funding is coming out of the heritage trust’s annual budget from NTI, but the organization is also pursuing potential donations from the regional Inuit associations and the federal government.



The next steps are only a few weeks away.

“We still need to do more community consultation, which I’m hoping to do over the wintertime this year to finalize the location of the house,” said Diesel.

“We should have the environmental surveys in the next couple weeks. My timeline now is to at least have the excavation done by autumn of next year and set up the framework, if there is still time and resources to cover the structure with the roof.”

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit\\_heritage\\_org\\_plans\\_traditional\\_thule\\_replica\\_in\\_iqaluit/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit_heritage_org_plans_traditional_thule_replica_in_iqaluit/)

## **Travellers build traditional Inuit Inuksuit on Sydney waterfront**



CTV Atlantic

Published Tuesday, November 3, 2015 6:39PM AST

Last Updated Wednesday, November 4, 2015 8:05AM AST

Over the past few days, dozens of stone monuments have been built using the rocks that line Sydney's boardwalk. No one knew who was putting them there, or why.

CTV News videographer Ryan MacDonald was headed down to the waterfront Tuesday to shoot some video of the stone statues when he stumbled across the men who built them.

“We travel across Canada, whenever we stop in a town, in our travels, we make Inukshuks as a sign that we were here,” says Inukshuk builder Jyn San Miguel.



Jyn San is originally from the Philippines, but now lives in Vancouver. He and his friend David, from Quebec, have been travelling across the country for 10 months.

Jyn San is originally from the Philippines, but now lives in Vancouver. He and his friend David, from Quebec, have been travelling across the country for 10 months.

The pair has been in Sydney for nearly a week, expressing themselves through art and becoming familiar with their new surroundings.

“A lot of people now use cell phones. They don't have time to touch the ground, the earth, so I find this is a good way to connect with the earth,” says Jyn San.

Many Canadians recognize the Inukshuk from a well-known Heritage Minute – a 60 second short film which depicts a significant person, event, or story in Canadian history.

The word Inukshuk, literally translated from Inuit, means human like, or the likeness of human.

The traditional meaning of the structures was to let people know you were here and so that others would know they are travelling in the right direction.

According to Jeff Ward, of the Membertou Heritage Park, aboriginal people in the arctic have been using Inuksuit as an important navigational marker for centuries.

“Up north is very desolate, so you need directions. If people were to look for us, we gotta let them know where we are going,” says Ward. “They give you directions. They give you hope. They give you, actually, a sense of trust.”

For Jyn San and David, the stones hold a different meaning.

“It's a sign of love, faith, and hope,” says Jyn San.

Residents say they are enjoying the new additions to the boardwalk.

“I think it adds a nice touch to the waterfront. I think it's beautiful,” says resident Linda Worth-Bezanson.

“What I can't get over is the coordination of them fellas, they got some steady hands,” says resident William Seymour.

There is a delicate balance required for the structures to stand tall. Each stone is carefully selected, each placement patiently thought out.

“There's some physics involved in it,” says Jyn San. “You want to make sure you know where's the centre of gravity of the rock and then you align them together.”

The pair say by building the Inuksuit they are not only leaving their mark, they are sending a message that artistic expression is always within reach.

“Art is everywhere, so there's no reason for you not to be creative,” says Jyn San.

**Direct Link:** <http://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/travellers-build-traditional-inuit-inuksuit-on-sydney-waterfront-1.2641107>

## **Inquests in fire deaths find First Nations need 911, better fire protection**

**Judge looked into deaths of 3 children, grandfather in 2 fires on Manitoba reserves**

By Chinta Puxley, The Canadian Press Posted: Nov 04, 2015 2:08 PM CT Last Updated: Nov 04, 2015 4:16 PM CT



This family home in St. Theresa Point First Nation was destroyed in a house fire in 2011. Five children escaped, but a two-month-old baby died. (RCMP)

A judge examining the deaths of three children and a grandfather in house fires on remote northern Manitoba reserves says all First Nations communities should have 911 service.

In her final report released Wednesday, Judge Tracey Lord recommended the emergency dispatch service be established on all reserves. She also recommended better co-ordinated firefighting training for First Nations communities and greater priority of fire safety inspections.

"First Nation community leaders (should) take steps to ensure that proper resources are allocated towards fire protection services," Lord wrote in her report.

Reserves should support education training and retain certified electricians and carpenters to perform fire safety inspections and do repairs, she recommended, despite concerns raised during the inquest that such inspections would result in many homes being condemned.

Some chiefs say the recommendations will do little to address the disproportionate number of fatalities from house fires on reserves.

When fire broke out at two-month-old Errabella Harper's home in St. Theresa Point in January 2011, the community's fire truck was broken, in a garage, with no fire hoses. No one knew where the keys were.

A second fire about two months later in God's Lake Narrows killed Demus James and his two grandchildren.

The inquest found the reserves were woefully unprepared to handle the fires. Neighbours tried to douse the flames with buckets, wet towels and a low-pressure hose.

Statistics from the Office of the Fire Commissioner show that residents of aboriginal communities in Manitoba are far more likely to die in house fires than people living off reserve, who are more likely to escape with injuries. Although fires on reserves make up less than five per cent of all fires in the province, they account for up to half the fatalities.

An internal report from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada estimated in 2011 that it would take a \$28-million injection of federal funding to reduce the number of deadly fires on Manitoba reserves. Only a fraction of that amount has been approved.

## **'Who's going to answer the call?' asks grand chief**

Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson, who represents northern First Nations, said 911 service for all reserves is a good idea, but premature given the state of some poorly funded, volunteer fire departments.

"Who's going to answer the call?" she asked. "We shouldn't have to just rely on volunteer firefighters and volunteer water truck delivery drivers. We should have trained and skilled people in this area. We have a lot of people who are willing to work and willing to be trained."

First Nations are being asked to do "everything with very little resources and funding," said North Wilson, who is with Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak.

Chief David McDougall of St. Theresa Point said the community would welcome 911 service. But the recommendation is meaningless without funding to staff the service and ensure there are paid, trained people ready to respond, he said.

Volunteers on the reserve are trying to look after their families, he pointed out. That means they might be hunting, fishing or working when an emergency call comes in. Very few of them would be willing to staff an emergency dispatch line overnight without being paid, he said.

The judge's report amounts to "beautiful rhetoric," he added.

"The meaning behind it, I really appreciate it ... but, in reality, how sustainable can it be?"

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/inquests-in-fire-deaths-find-first-nations-need-911-better-fire-protection-1.3304183>

## Aboriginal Crime, Justice & Law Enforcement

### **Vigil demands justice for Val d'Or aboriginal women alleging sexual abuse by police**

Posted on 10/29/2015 10:51:00 PM by [Andrew Brennan](#)



Several hundred people stood at Place-des-Arts Thursday evening in solidarity with aboriginal women in Val d'Or alleging in 14 separate cases they were sexually abused by provincial police.

"We believe you," Melissa Mollen-Dupuis of the native interest group Idle No More Quebec said, speaking symbolically to the Val d'Or women alleging the abuse, who were not in attendance.

The faces of dozens of missing or murdered aboriginal women stood out in the candlelight, linking the allegations of sexual abuse in Val d'Or to the wider dangers of abuse, kidnapping and murder facing aboriginal women. Over 1,100 known aboriginal women have gone missing or have been murdered since 1980.

Organizers are calling for a public inquiry into the Val d'Or allegations. The behaviour of SQ provincial police officers is currently being investigated by the Montreal police force, overseen by an independent observer.

On a national level, participants said they wanted Prime Minister-designate Justin Trudeau to deliver on his campaign promise to open a federal inquiry into Canada's missing and murdered native women.

"The situation in Val d'Or has shaken up a lot of people, why that is I don't know—maybe it has to do with the election of [Trudeau] who said he would bring the issue of missing and murdered aboriginal women to the fore, because before that we were speaking to the deaf ears of Prime Minister Stephen Harper," Executive Director of the Native Women's Association of Canada Claudette Dumont-Smith surmised. "So, I think all that has culminated in greater interest."

For Mohawk activist Ellen Gabriel, well-known as a mediator in the 1990 Oka Crisis, society at-large needs to address how it views First Nations and aboriginal women.

"It's changing the attitude of society, because if the police force have this attitude towards aboriginal women, imagine what the rest of society [thinks]," she told CJAD News.

Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard has agreed to meet with regional First Nations chiefs on Nov. 4 to discuss the allegations of abuse in Val d'Or.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cjad.com/cjad-news/2015/10/29/vigil-demands-justice-for-val-dor-aboriginal-women-alleging-sexual-abuse-by-police>

## **Lobster fishermen charged after confrontation with First Nations**

**First Nations fishermen accused of trying to sell undersize lobster, but they say catch was planted by others**

By Bridget Yard, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 30, 2015 8:00 AM AT Last Updated: Oct 30, 2015 9:35 AM AT





Anthony Peter-Paul expected his first season as a lobster fisherman to be tough and profitable, but it turned into a situation where, he says, he "felt helpless."

The St. Thomas University student, and Pabineau First Nation man, spent the 2015 season fishing lobster in the Bay of Chaleur with a first-time licence-holder, also from Pabineau.



First-time lobster fisherman Anthony Peter-Paul says he was caught in a confrontation on the water near Stonehaven wharf and worries he won't be able to fish next spring. (CBC News)

"It started off with a fishermen's meeting which they have every year at Stonehaven," said Peter-Paul

"Our chief, [Anthony's father] David Peter-Paul, brought up the prospect of a Pabineau fishing licence coming to that wharf, and a lot of the fishermen didn't like that."

The licence, held by Nathaniel Hache, is the fourth First Nations licence in Stonehaven.

Peter-Paul says the non-native fishermen at the wharf were immediately hostile towards the new crew.

"There was a lot of negative feedback during that meeting and a couple of threats, as in, 'Wait until you get on the water,'" he said.

According to Peter-Paul, who is now attending university classes in Fredericton, tensions rose as the season progressed.

## **Accusations from both sides**



The Stonehaven wharf is home to four First Nation lobster fishing licences (CBC News)

On July 1, Peter-Paul says Hache was informed by the boat's captain, Jason Hebert, that a mob of angry fishermen had accosted him, accusing the crew of selling undersize lobster.

"They were saying that when our lobster came in after it passed through the hands of the buyers, that [the Department of Fisheries and Oceans] came along and measured randomly the lobsters," said Peter-Paul.

"Their perspective is that we weren't measuring our lobsters."

Peter-Paul disputes the accusation, and says the group's licence-holder is "very anal" and careful to measure.

"It's his first season fishing that licence and he doesn't want any illegal lobster on the boat."

The Pabineau fishermen believe the undersized lobster were planted.

"We're thinking it's a conspiracy between the fishermen that do not want us there to rid us of the wharf by planting this lobster and maybe paying the offloaders to go along with it. Maybe paying the buyers," said Peter-Paul.

According to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the incident is still under investigation. Chief Peter-Paul has been unavailable for comment on the issue.

## **Confrontation on the water**



Stonehaven, where the dispute between the fishermen happened, is located in northeast New Brunswick. (Google)

After the accusations of undersize lobster fishing at the wharf, the boat's captain steered away from Stonehaven and docked on Miscou Island.

Peter-Paul, Hebert, and Hache sailed back towards Stonehaven two days later, on July 3, to retrieve the full lobster traps they had left behind.

The crew contacted the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and local RCMP to arrange for an escort, but Peter-Paul says their boat was not met by any officials.

"As soon as the fishermen at Stonehaven saw us, they bombarded us with their boats. They circled us, they tied up to us, they almost crashed into us," he said.

"There was a lot of racial remarks and stuff like that. It was a really messy scene and it seemed like it was about to get physical." - *Anthony Peter-Paul*

"They were yelling and screaming, threatening us."

Peter-Paul's cousin Greg Peter-Paul filmed the incident and later posted the footage to Facebook.

Anthony Peter-Paul remembers eight boats circling their lobster vessel, several of which tied on to their boat.

Eventually, the crew from Pabineau retreated back towards Miscou Island and met up with an escort of DFO and RCMP members.

"There was a lot of racial remarks and stuff like that. It was a really messy scene and it seemed like it was about to get physical," said Peter-Paul.

"We told them we were going to leave and they let us leave."

As the vessel made its way back along the coastline, Peter-Paul and his colleagues attempted to empty their traps and sell the lobster they had recovered.

Miller's Wharf and Grande Anse buyers refused their catch.

"We had to drop them back in the water," said Peter-Paul.

"So there was a big loss there."

## **Fishermen in court**



Ryan Pettigrew is charged with mischief under \$5,000. He says catches are excellent in Stonehaven and that he was trying to protect the area from irresponsible fishing.

Bathurst RCMP say two men were arrested in connection with the incident on July 3.

Ryan Pettigrew 40, and Ronald Good, 34, will appear in court on Nov. 2 to answer to charges of mischief under \$5,000.

Pettigrew has been fishing from Stonehaven since 2006. He says he was trying to protect and preserve the lobster fishery on July 3.

"We acted. Got a little hot under the collar, especially myself," he said.

"There were charges laid against me for cutting a rope off when they grabbed it. Yes I did. Do I feel bad for doing this? Yes."

Pettigrew also said he rejects Peter-Paul's theory that the Pabineau fishermen were framed or that the confrontation was racially-motivated.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/stonehaven-fishermen-first-nations-lobster-tension-1.3294575>

## **Val-d'Or aboriginal abuse allegations: Montreal police create hotline**

## Police release videos in French, Algonquin and Atikamekw to reach out to communities in Val-d'Or

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 30, 2015 7:49 PM ET Last Updated: Oct 30, 2015 7:49 PM ET



Police are asking anyone with information about the Val-d'Or abuse allegations to contact them, in English or French, at 1-844-615-3118. (CBC)

The Montreal police department has created a special hotline now that it has taken over the investigation into the alleged abuse of aboriginal women in Val-d'Or at the hands of provincial police officers.

Investigators are asking anyone with information to contact them, in English or French, at 1-844-615-3118.

Police said they have already received calls on the hotline.

Montreal police have been in charge of the case since last week, days after a report by Radio-Canada's investigative program *Enquête* uncovered stories of sexual violence toward aboriginal women in the Quebec community of Val-d'Or. With a population of about 32,000, the town is situated about 500 kilometres northwest of Montreal. It is located close to several Algonquin communities.

Speaking publicly for the first time, alleged victims told *Enquête* about a pattern involving provincial police over a period of at least two decades.

They said officers routinely picked up women who appeared to be intoxicated, drove them out of town and left them to walk home in the cold. Some allege they were physically assaulted or made to perform sex acts.

Since the month of May, before the *Enquête* report aired, the case was being handled by the Sûreté du Québec, which meant the force was investigating its own officers.

"Since the transfer of these investigations, the SPVM has communicated with the complainants, [and] with the assistance of community partners in some cases," said a statement issued by Montreal police late Friday afternoon.

Montreal police also made videos, with the support of the Atikamekw and Algonquin police services, as a way to reach out to the aboriginal community in their native language.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/val-d-or-aboriginal-abuse-allegations-montreal-police-create-hotline-1.3297964>

## Accusations of police abuse deeply divide Que. community



The allegations of physical and sexual abuse against aboriginal women in Val d'Or may have wider repercussions.

Emily Chan, CTVNews.ca

Published Sunday, November 1, 2015 11:42AM EST

Accusations that provincial police sexually and physically assaulted indigenous women have left the Quebec community of Val d'Or deeply divided.

Since the allegations first emerged a week and a half ago, eight officers have been suspended, Montreal police have launched a probe into the accusations, and officers are urging other potential victims to come forward.

But developments in the case have done little to ease the friction in the community, where some residents say they cannot trust the police, and others say they don't believe the women.



A woman from Val d'Or, Que., alleges that provincial police mistreated her.

"It's too big for a town like this to absorb," Val d'Or resident Amelia Bergeron said in a French interview with CTV Montreal. "Police say they're the victims; the native women (say they're the victims) too."



Pierre Veilleux, the president of the Quebec provincial police association, also said tensions are running high between police and the public.

"There's a lot of judgment right now," he said. "A lot of suspicions."

Amid the debate and division, the women who first made the accusations are standing by their accounts of abuse.

One woman, who asked that the media not publish her real name, told CTV Montreal that she experienced abuse more than once.

The first incident, she said, happened years ago, when she was in a relationship with an abusive partner.

One day, when her partner became violent, she says she called the police for help. But nobody responded.

"I called the cops, the first time," she said. "I waited 20 minutes. They never came."

Another time, the 31-year-old mother of four says, the cops arrived to deal with a different dispute. But instead of offering help, they told her to walk home in the middle of winter.

"It was minus 40 (degrees)," she said. "I was in shorts and running shoes."

The First Nations woman says she phoned a friend for a ride and, angrily, called the officer a name.

Then, she says the situation got worse.

"They threw me on the ground," she said. "I couldn't breathe because my face was in the snow. I was running out of air."

She said she remembers the feeling of her head, trapped between the ground and the officer's boot.

She says the experience left her face, leg and arm injured.

But it wasn't just the physical effects. The woman says she was emotionally damaged as well.

"I felt like I was treated like a dog," she said.

Now, the woman is joining others in her community, sharing stories of alleged mistreatment at the hands of police.

And while the accusations have been met with criticism and opposition, they have also opened up dialogue and fuelled further calls for an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women.

Speaking to CTV Montreal on Saturday, another local said it's time for his community to have a difficult discussion.

"We have to break to the wall of silence," resident Jimmy Papatie said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/accusations-of-police-abuse-deeply-divide-que-community-1.2637437>

## **More Aboriginal women alleging abuse by SQ officers**

Posted on 11/1/2015 4:25:00 AM by [Taylor C. Noakes](#)

There's more fallout from the damning allegations of physical and sexual abuse by Sureté du Québec officers in Val d'Or. Days after public security minister Lise Thériault stepped down from her position, more women have come forward with stories of barbaric treatment at the hands of provincial police officers.

In [an exclusive interview with CTV Montreal](#), "Sandra" a mother of four of Algonquin heritage, indicated she had been told to walk home in the snow in her shorts after contacting police to deal with a domestic dispute. Incredulous and angry, she admitted to having called the responding officer a name, at which point she alleges she was pulled from a pickup truck and thrown to the ground. She was forced face-down into a snowbank, her head under the heel of an officer's boot.

"Sandra" is one of several Aboriginal women who have come forward alleging abuse at the hands of those sworn to 'serve and protect'.

Residents of Val d'Or interviewed by CTV Montreal indicate that, since the allegations surfaced roughly a week ago, the town is now divided, with few knowing who to trust and whom to believe.

Montreal police have taken over the investigation from the SQ and have taken the additional step to issue calls in Aboriginal tongues asking for additional alleged victims to come forward.

For their part the union representing the suspended SQ officers argue their members are being unfairly tried in the public realm. The problem of domestic violence facing Aboriginal women is national in scope and rooted in a complex web of social pathologies, namely endemic poverty, institutionalized racism and drug and alcohol

abuse. Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees, Matthew Coon Come, is cognizant that violence against Aboriginal women does not always come from outside Aboriginal communities: "...I do not pretend that there is no violence against Aboriginal women in our communities. We need to face it."

Many in Val d'Or and in Aboriginal communities nation-wide are convinced an inquiry into violence and what happened to hundreds, if not thousands, of murdered and missing indigenous women is long overdue.

\* The names of certain individuals in this article have been modified to protect their identity.

*With files from CTV Montreal*

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cjad.com/cjad-news/2015/11/01/more-aboriginal-women-alleging-abuse-by-sq-officers>

## **First Nations student deaths inquest looks at river-related deaths in Thunder Bay**

**Testimony from mother of student delayed by fog in Thunder Bay, Toronto lawyers unable to fly in**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 02, 2015 7:00 AM ET Last Updated: Nov 02, 2015 2:30 PM ET



The death of Jethro Anderson was expected to be the subject of evidence beginning Monday at the First Nations student deaths inquest in Thunder Bay, but the proceedings were delayed by weather.

The inquest is looking into the deaths of seven young people who died, between 2000 and 2011, after coming to the city for school, from remote First Nations communities.

Anderson, who was from Kasabonika Lake First Nation, died in 2000. He was 15 years old. His body, like that of four other students, was found in a river.

Each of the next five deaths to be examined by the inquest "are linked by the fact that they were all found in the water, so this is going to move the inquest into a different phase," said lawyer Jonathan Rudin, who represents several families of students who died.



Jethro Anderson of Kasabonika Lake First Nation died in 2000 while attending high school in Thunder Bay. He was 15. (CBC)

"Missing persons protocols, police investigation issues, those are going to come more to the fore now," Rudin said.

Anderson's mother, Stella Anderson, was scheduled to testify Monday afternoon, but Toronto-based lawyers from various parties with standing at the inquest were unable to fly into Thunder Bay because of fog.

The inquest is now scheduled to resume, with Anderson's testimony, on Tuesday.

"I miss Jethro every day and the thought of learning more about his death is frightening and brings up old wounds that have been slowly healing," she said in a statement issued before the inquest began.

The inquest is expected to continue until March, 2016.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/first-nations-student-deaths-inquest-looks-at-river-related-deaths-in-thunder-bay-1.3297537>

## **Val-d'Or allegations create challenge for new Montreal police aboriginal committee**

## Advisory committee announced in June to hold first meeting next week

By Shari Okeke, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 02, 2015 5:00 AM ET Last Updated: Nov 02, 2015 11:40 AM ET



Melissa Mollen Dupuis welcomes the collaboration with Montreal police but is not surprised by skepticism in the community.

The Montreal police department's new aboriginal community advisory committee could lead to a major change in the relationship between police and First Nations in Montreal, says one leader in Montreal's urban aboriginal community.

However Melissa Mollen Dupuis, an organizer of Idle No More Quebec, says the timing is not ideal.

The new partnership comes as provincial police officers in Val-d'Or face allegations of abusing aboriginal women.

"Police they think we're all 'Indians'... and we all think they're all police. So we don't [make] any distinction between the federal, provincial or the municipal [police]," said Mollen Dupuis.



Jennifer Brazeau is one the aboriginal Montrealers on the Montreal police department's new aboriginal community advisory committee. "We're being heard, we're pushing our issues forward," she said. (Shari Okeke/CBC)

The new community advisory committee includes roughly nine aboriginal Montrealers and will meet for the first time next week.

Montreal police promised to create the committee in a signed agreement with Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network in June.

The goal of that agreement is to improve communications and understanding between Montreal police and aboriginal Montrealers.

## **Tackling the issues**

The committee will tackle several issues, including developing prevention programs, developing a protocol for when aboriginal women are reported missing and setting up aboriginal culture training for all Montreal police officers.

"[The relationship] is so new that nobody's going to trust it for the moment," said Mollen Dupuis, who added that if police succeed in earning trust, this partnership could lead to a major change in the relationship between First Nations and police in Montreal.

'We're being heard, we're pushing our issues forward.' - *advisory committee member Jennifer Brazeau*

Allegations of aboriginal women being abused by provincial police in Val-d'Or were reported by Radio-Canada's investigative program *Enquête*. They are creating yet another challenge when it comes to building bridges.

The Montreal police department has officially taken over the investigation into the alleged abuse by Val-d'Or provincial police officers.

Mollen Dupuis hopes the new partnership between the aboriginal community and police in Montreal is not damaged by the fact there's opposition to Montreal police investigating provincial police.

"I just hope [Montreal police] are going to continue with this new relationship, but not hold it against First Nations for asking for that independent investigation [in Val-d'Or]," she said.

## **Community partners optimistic**

Community leaders at the forefront of the agreement are optimistic about the new partnership with Montreal police.



"They're willing to be trained. That's huge. They're willing to have this table this advisory table. There are so many things they're willing to do," said Nakuset, co-president of the Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network.

"We're being heard, we're pushing our issues forward," said advisory committee member Jennifer Brazeau, who is also a project manager at Quebec Native Women.

## **'How can we trust police?'**

Montreal police Cmdr. Du Dinh sat with members of the Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network at the Network's fall meeting last Thursday to answer questions from the community about the new agreement.

The topic of Val-d'Or kept coming up along with the question: "how can we trust police?"

"Every time there's an issue like that that makes the headlines...that kind of trust relationship is taking a step backward and we have to work harder to go forward," Dinh said in an interview.

## **Montreal police willing to listen**

There's also skepticism about whether Montreal police will really listen to aboriginal members of the new advisory committee.

Brazeau insists they will.

"We've been focusing on having only aboriginal representation on [the committee] to make sure its aboriginal representation with aboriginal perspective that's given to the police force," she said.

In addition to the aboriginal Montrealers on the committee, Dinh and the liaison officer assigned to aboriginal communities will also take part.

"I have to applaud [Montreal police], they've been open, they've been willing to listen to what we have and they've moved more quickly than we ever thought [they would]," Brazeau said.

Initially, Montreal police suggested scheduling the new advisory committee's first meeting in January 2016.

However, after the Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network insisted it must happen sooner, Montreal police moved the meeting to next week.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/val-dor-aboriginal-crisis-montreal-police-community-advisory-committee-1.3299291>

## **Remembering William Wuttunee: Cree lawyer was a trailblazer**

**First status Indian lawyer in Western Canada was 'man before his time,' says Doug Cuthand**

By Doug Cuthand, [for CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 02, 2015 9:11 PM ET Last Updated: Nov 03, 2015 11:33 AM ET



William Wuttunee became western Canada's first status Indian lawyer in 1954. (Nola Wuttunee/Facebook)

William (Bill) Wuttunee was a man before his time. He died Fri. Oct. 30, leaving a trail that was both controversial and prescient.

Wuttunee was born May 8, 1928 on the Red Pheasant First Nation, located south of North Battleford, Sask. The reserve had a day school for the earlier grades but he had to attend residential school in Onion Lake to complete his high school.

He graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in 1954, becoming Western Canada's first status Indian lawyer at a time when most reserves had no electricity, people lived in log homes and horses were the chief means of transportation. His people were beginning a period of rapid change that would be for both better and worse.

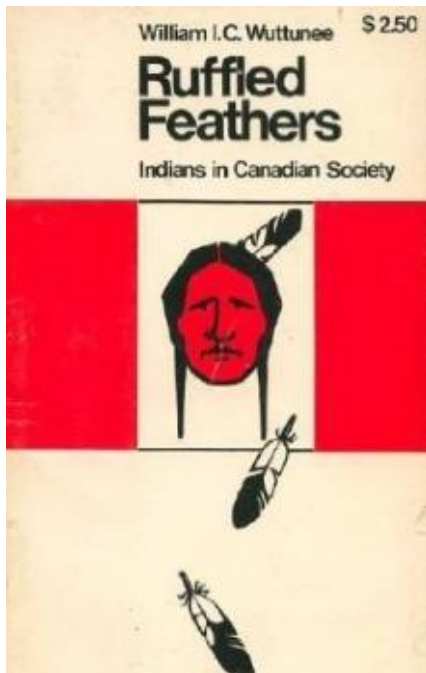
Wuttunee was a family friend — our families are related, although distantly. He and my dad were contemporaries who worked together to lay the foundation for the modern Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. In 1956 the leaders gathered in Fort Qu'Appelle and developed the constitution and bylaws for the federation.

Later he would work on the national level and assist in the creation of the Native Council of Canada, which evolved into the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples.

In the early 1960s he decided to concentrate on his law career and he set up a law office in Calgary. For years he practised law, later setting up a branch office in Yellowknife.

I recall the Sarcee band owed a company money and Wuttunee sued Sarcee on behalf of that company. It was considered an act of betrayal at the time. But he showed that everyone had to pay their bills and First Nations couldn't hide behind the Indian Act.

Wuttunee was also a bit of a free thinker and he publicly disagreed with the Indian Association of Alberta, in particular the organization's leader, Harold Cardinal. He felt that too much emphasis was being placed on the treaties and not enough on individual initiative.



William Wuttunee was a strong proponent of integration. It was the topic of his book, *Ruffled Feathers*, published in 1971. (Bell Books)

He was a strong proponent of integration. It was the topic of his book, *Ruffled Feathers*, published in 1971. It was met with scorn and derision by First Nations leaders at the time.

In retrospect, differing points of view are needed for the creation of democratic First Nations communities. His book, though now largely forgotten, was a model for other writers who would speak their mind and be critical of their people.

Gradually he reunited with his people and became accepted by the younger generation. When the first group of aboriginal lawyers set up the indigenous bar association he was invited to join.

Later, when the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was set up, he played the role of elder advisor and was one of the architects of the process.

He told his story of his days at residential school and the brutality and pain that many students suffered. He spoke of experiences that he had previously not shared with his family.

By now his life had come full circle. He was respected for his work and acknowledged as a trailblazer. And he had seen the members of his profession grow to a community of over 2,000 indigenous lawyers.

Bill Wuttunee died last Friday, at age 87, and began his next journey.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/remembering-bill-wuttunee-1.3300662>

## **Inside the Course Canadian Officers Are Taking to Improve Their Relationship with First Nations**

November 3, 2015

By [Jane Gerster](#)

Constable Julia Fox arrived in Watson Lake, in southern Yukon, in February of 2011. That month, the temperature dipped below minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit and the wind howled for two days straight at more than 25 miles per hour.

Fox was one of several new officers to join the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's (Canada's federal police force, also known as RCMP) Watson Lake detachment within a span of months. The detachment, which has fewer than a dozen members, is responsible for policing Lower Post, an Indigenous community in northern British Columbia and the location of [one of the most notorious Indian Residential Schools](#). On this last point, Fox arrived unaware.

There was no warm welcome, she says. In 2009, two local constables had been accused of sexually assaulting a woman in the area. About a year before Fox arrived, the Yukon Supreme Court found the men not guilty.

"A completely different world," says Fox, recalling her first impressions. "I'm used to people not liking me for what I do for a living... but there was all this automatic tension between police and residents."

It wasn't until the spring of 2011, that she really learned why. Fox and other officers were sent to a Whitehorse hotel for a new two-day training course designed to help officers do their jobs with compassion and care for the Indigenous communities they serve (the RCMP estimates it polices more than 40 percent of Indigenous people living in Canada, compared to roughly 20 percent of the rest of Canada's population).

The course's bland title, "Yukon First Nations Information Session," belies its significance. At a time when education is being touted as key to reconciliation and helping bridge the divides between Indigenous people and the rest of Canada, the Yukon course is notable for the balance it strikes. It corrects misconceptions and it strips away false assumptions, but it does not foster a sense of guilt.

In December 2010, just two months before Fox arrived in the north, [the Task Force on Acutely Intoxicated Persons at Risk released its final report](#). They had been tasked with investigating two separate instances in which an intoxicated person died while in care, the first in an RCMP cell and the second in a local detox facility. Their inquiry: "Were these two episodes in fact only coincidental or do systemic weaknesses exist, which might be changed to prevent such occurrences in the future?"

The first recommendation from the task force's final report was that frontline workers be trained in "First Nations' content and cross cultural awareness" to ensure compassionate and non-judgmental care. The report identified the training program developed with the Northern Institute of Social Justice at Yukon College as a good option.

Now, all new RCMP officers arriving in the territory take that training, although how soon upon arrival hinges on the college's schedule. Unlike the nationally mandated Indigenous awareness course that officers must take within their first two years, which is done online, officers must attend the course in the Yukon in person.

And taking two full days to break down preconceived notions, while building a safe space to address—and correct—racist perceptions, is where the college's trainers have excelled.

In September 2015, nine people walked into a bright classroom at Yukon College in Whitehorse for a one-day version of the course taken by Yukon officers like Fox. Some were Yukon born and raised; others newly arrived. They scrawled their names on white card stock with Sharpies and filled Styrofoam cups with coffee.

They weren't officers or correction facility workers. Like Fox, they were there to learn. Unlike Fox, they had come by choice.

It seemed at first like a condensed history class, as the instructors raced through time:

1763—The Royal Proclamation of 1763 recognized aboriginal title and made clear that only the Crown may acquire First Nations land, and then only through treaty.

1867—Canada is born. That same year, [the Indian Act](#) is introduced and Status Indians essentially become wards of the Crown.

1884—The federal government introduces [anti-potlatch laws](#) under the Indian Act, making all First Nations gatherings potentially illegal (they did not clearly define potlatch).

1891—The first residential school opens in the Yukon.

These may seem like nothing more than a series of historical moments you might memorize when cramming for an exam. But for Fox, who'd been an officer for about five years by the time she took the Yukon course, it was key to understanding the tension in Watson Lake. It was, she explained, the first time she realized that RCMP officers had forcibly removed Indigenous children from their homes and corralled them in the residential schools where many children were abused emotionally and physically—some sexually.

But even upon learning this, Fox recalled that her instructors did not pass judgment on the officers present. This is not about how police officers themselves are inherently bad, she remembered them saying, it's about bridging the gap.

"Right off the bat, it was very accepting," she said. She remembers sitting in that hotel room and thinking how, for the damaged relationship between her Watson Lake colleagues and their community, there was "not just an easy fix."

In that September classroom, there was an early indication that what is learned in schools across the country is often either forgotten or incomplete. It happens when someone asks: "So, Indian agents are not actually First Nations?"

No, Indian agents were government-appointed officials who worked toward the goal of assimilation. Their jobs included enforcing anti-potlatch laws and forcing children into residential schools.

"That's where a lot of the issues arise from: the place of not knowing," said Davida Wood, a member of the [Teslin Tlingit](#) First Nation and one of two instructors. "We see ourselves as the nice guys, the peacekeepers," she said, "and we still see our history like that."

Wood's co-instructor is Cassandra Ivany. For some students, her presence is initially a surprise: after all, Ivany is white and hails from Newfoundland. But the combination of a First Nations instructor with a non-First Nations instructor is where the Northern Institute of Social Justice has found its balance—this combination is central, according to Wood and Ivany, to creating an environment where people can ask questions that they worry might reveal racist assumptions. And the two instructors excel at putting students at ease as they navigate from ignorance to awareness.

"What we've found," said Wood, "is that it almost makes it seem OK for the other people to be like, 'I thought that too.' Or, 'I didn't know.'"

There are 14 First Nations in the Yukon, and each one has an advisor on Yukon College's committee on First Nations Initiatives. The course was designed in collaboration with them, and they review it annually.

What Ivany and Wood teach is based on what the Yukon's First Nations want taught: their history, their heritage and culture, their world views, their governance, their contemporary issues, and [their residential school experiences](#). Running through all six topics can, at moments, feel like a single sad theme: racist stereotypes and the human rights violations that follow from those stereotypes.

"It's really difficult to change people's opinions of the idea that Aboriginal people have this Indian credit card that they use for all these free services that the rest of us can't access," said Ivany.

In class, the instructors circulate an information folder that highlights the similarities and differences between Yukon First Nations ("No," they often have to explain, "not all Indigenous people speak the same language") and summarizes certain sections of the Indian Act.

There's stunned surprise when Wood explains that the Canadian Human Rights Act was [only applied to the Indian Act and to First Nations governments in 2011](#)—just four years ago.

After revelations such as this, it was Ivany who reminded people why they need to listen: "It's not just First Nations history; it's Canadian history, and we all have to come to grips with it."

Later still, Wood explained Canada's general obliviousness.

"Unless something happens, you have no reason to know the background of it," she said. "First Nations people are often brought to light in the same way when we talk about some of the things in the Indian Act or when we talk about certain things with Status. Because that's all you know, you don't have any reason to question something different because that's just the way it works."

Fox has no doubt that the Yukon course helped make her a better officer. Above all, she values the Indigenous perspective she gained from the course. "There are so many different elements that come into play that shaped this person's life or certain communities' lives," she said, "to see that gave me more of an understanding."

This understanding manifests itself sometimes in small but significant ways. "If someone offers you a gift, traditionally for us, we can't accept gifts," she said, "but [now] it's seen differently." And although her job is "go, go, go," she's learned "it's better to sit and have coffee and tell stories and listen to their stories."

It's little cultural insights such as these that are key, according to Wood. So is knowing what might trigger a flashback to residential school trauma: the smell of bleach, or split pea and ham soup, or oatmeal, or a cologne that smells like a person's abuser. Wood recalled the story of a nurse who started going by her middle name after she was told that



she shared her first name with another nurse who had abused residential school students decades earlier.

Fox explained that the course was just the beginning for her and other officers in Watson Lake, who began building bridges within their community where relations were strained.

Indeed, the RCMP's national office says lots of the education work being done with Indigenous people across the country happens at a detachment level. The force is also currently consulting with the National Aboriginal Policing Services to determine more definitively what training exists across the country and what gaps still exist.

And there are gaps. Ann Maje Raider, a local Kaska woman in Watson Lake and a member of LAWS—[the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society](#)—said that calling the situation "strained is putting it mildly."

Raider was among a small group of Kaska women who started LAWS in 1998 as a way to empower women and youth and ensure the wellbeing of their community. They delivered a healing program and established a camp to help elders learn about traditional medicine. She says the group's efforts are an attempt to reconnect with what was stolen. They work "always toward restoring dignity and building wellbeing."

It was LAWS, she says, that approached the RCMP's Watson Lake detachment about trying to find a way forward.

"People did not feel safe approaching them," Raider says, "and there were incidents where I would say, 'Well, you should call and talk to the RCMP' and they'd say, 'No'."

The first meeting was attended by Fox (who transferred to the RCMP's Whitehorse detachment in June 2014) and would eventually lead to a joint safety protocol. But the atmosphere at the time was tense, Raider recalls on a laugh, with "the RCMP on one side, arms folded, the women on the other side, arms folded."

But the meetings, like the Yukon course, were not about assigning guilt for historical wrongs. They were about finding a way forward, and in many respects, Raider says, they're succeeding.

Now, Raider says, the relationship is "more of an open door."

It's not perfect, but she sees RCMP officers engaging in community and youth work, not folding their arms over their chests at a table.

Back in the Yukon College classroom, Ivany concluded the course with a plea for understanding. If you see a First Nations person drunk on the street, or you see a First Nations home in disrepair, think about how their lives may be affected by the trauma of residential school. Was their mother, like Wood's, forced to attend? Think how their decisions might be restricted by the Indian Act, how there was for Status Indians and

First Nations governments, no recourse under the Canadian Human Rights Act until 2011.

"It is so easy to just make those assumptions, to talk about the lazy Indian or the drunk or the holes in the wall or this and that," Wood said, "without knowing any of these things it's absolutely easy to make those assumptions."

Teaching the Yukon course, she explained, has made her more accountable to her own nation. She sits on the Teslin Tlingit general council and on a few committees and boards. Together, Wood and Ivany teach about half a dozen sessions to RCMP officers and health and social workers each year.

They offer voluntary, public courses maybe twice a year. But as Ivany noted wryly: "The people we want to come here the most are the people who don't want to."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.vice.com/read/inside-the-rcmps-course-on-improving-its-relationship-with-first-nations>

## **First Nations woman to sue police for breaking her shoulder**

**Bonnie Muckuck of Mishkeegogamang, seeking \$2M in damages for pain, suffering, humiliation**

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 03, 2015 7:00 AM ET Last Updated: Nov 03, 2015 7:06 AM ET



OPP credit a dashboard camera with helping them locate a semi-truck involved in a collision on Highway 11. (CBC)

A woman from Mishkeegogamang First Nation in northwestern Ontario is suing the Ontario Provincial Police for \$2 million in damages after her shoulder and ribs were broken during an arrest.

Bonnie Muckuck, 55, was found not guilty earlier this year of assaulting police in a 2013 altercation in Pickle Lake, Ont., in which she was injured. She was also found not guilty of assault on her partner, a complaint that led to her contact with police.

The judge in that case ruled that the injuries to Muckuck, whom he described as "frail and bird-like", were caused by police at the time of her arrest.

A statement of claim was filed by lawyers for Muckuck in Ontario Superior Court in October.

It alleges the arresting officers "perjured themselves in order to incriminate [Muckuck]"; that they failed to conduct a competent investigation and that they did not have reasonable grounds for the arrest during which Muckuck was allegedly assaulted.

The claim was filed in Toronto, but in court documents Muckuck is asking for the case to be heard in Thunder Bay.

The province's police watchdog conducted an investigation into the conduct of officers in this case. The Special Investigations Unit concluded in July 2014 that no criminal charges are warranted against the officers involved.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/first-nations-woman-to-sue-police-for-breaking-her-shoulder-1.3299802>

## **Val-d'Or case: Quebec First Nations chiefs, Premier Philippe Couillard meet**

**Human rights lawyer Fannie Lafontaine named independent observer**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 04, 2015 7:23 AM ET Last Updated: Nov 04, 2015 1:31 PM ET



Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard will meet with First Nations chiefs about the allegations of abuse of Quebec provincial officers in Val-d'Or. (Jacques Boissinot/THE CANADIAN PRESS)

Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard appealed for calm in the wake of the Val d'Or crisis.

His meeting this morning with First Nations chiefs focused on the measures taken by the province following allegations of abuse against Aboriginal women in Val-d'Or by Quebec provincial police officers.

## **New observer for police investigation**

Couillard announced that Fannie Lafontaine will be the independent observer appointed to oversee the police investigation led by the Montreal police into the allegations.

Lafontaine is a human rights lawyer and the Canada research chair on International Criminal Justice and Human Rights at Université Laval.

However, many of the First Nations chiefs feel that the government should have included them in the decision-making process.

"We believed that it would at least be a joint decision-making process but that was far from the case," said Ghislain Picard, the chief of the assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador.

## **Couillard calls upon the federal government to act**

For now, Couillard says, Quebec will hold off on its own inquiry into the Val-d'Or allegations. "We will first see what the federal government has to say," said Couillard.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau needs to move ahead with its an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women, and also provide more financial support to First Nations, said Couillard.

Picard agreed, saying that it needs to happen as soon as possible but Quebec should launch its own independent investigation into Val-d'Or.

"We want this to happen with as little delays as possible considering the crisis in front of us," said Picard.

Couillard called upon the new Liberal federal government to intervene on issues like lack of housing or clean drinking water that persist on First Nations territories.

"It's not acceptable for a wealthy country like Canada," said Couillard.

## **Additional funding for Aboriginal projects in Val-d'Or**

The provincial government will pump \$6.1 million into various social projects located in the community.

This includes money for the Native Friendship Centre as well as Chez Willie, a day centre for those in difficulty.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-first-nations-chiefs-meet-quebec-premier-couillard-observer-named-1.3303224>

## **Aboriginal Education & Youth**

### **First Nations optimistic about foster care changes**

Edmonton, AB, Canada / iNews880

[Brenton Driedger](#)

October 30, 2015 01:58 pm

The Notley government is taking a new tack in Aboriginal relations, and it's already showing up in foster care.

The permanency committee has been scrapped in the Edmonton region. That's a body that helped decide if foster kids could be adopted. The panel was disbanded after hearing concerns from Aboriginal communities.

"That permanency committee was more on the side of First Nations, how they want to have their input," says Human Services Minister Irfan Sabir. "They are telling us that they don't think this is the right way, the most efficient way. So we went with that."

Some First Nations have been pushing for the change for a couple of years. One of them was Saddle Lake Cree Nation. Denise Steinhauer is the band designate, who works on files for the First Nation's children living off-reserve. She says one of the big problems is adoptive parents would sign off on plan to keep Aboriginal kids connected to their culture. But after the adoption, they wouldn't follow through.

"They promise all they want, but there's nothing saying that they have to do this or they're going to do this," says Steinhauer. "They don't have (a) policeman after they adopt or they go private (guardianship). It is final. When they adopt, even when they go private (guardianship), you lose sight of these kids. You never see them again."

Steinhauer feels that permanency committee often had its mind made up before she could suggest alternative Aboriginal placements for off-reserve children. She argues the rest of the panel often failed to consider the ideas of an Aboriginal elder who sat on the committee.

Some workers and foster parents in the system are concerned that scrapping permanency committee will add to the delays in finding “forever homes” for kids who won’t be allowed to return to their biological families. But Sabir is confident they can do better at working with First Nations, and still make progress on permanency.

“That policy still stays there,” says Sabir. “(Permanency committee) was just one way of achieving that goal.”

“I do not anticipate any delays,” says Sabir. “We are hoping that it will not delay permanency across the board. And in individual cases, I would encourage foster parents to work through their caseworkers.”

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate is taking a wait and see approach, before deciding if the change is leaving kids in limbo.

“A process for permanency must begin from the very first involvement with the child intervention system, and permanency needs to be a key consideration throughout all involvement with young people and their families,” says Tim Chander, the advocate’s communications manager, in a statement. “Permanency committees were one strategy intended to support young people to attain permanency. The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate will keep an eye on this issue through our direct involvement with youth.”

Decisions made by the permanency committee before the end of September will remain in effect. But cases with upcoming dates are cancelled, leaving some caseworkers and foster parents anxious about what will happen to the children in their care (*full disclosure: the reporter is a foster parent whose children are in a similar situation*). But some First Nations, like Saddle Lake, see the change as an opportunity to have a stronger voice in the conversation involving their kids.

“Permanency is a word that doesn’t feel good in our community or in our culture,” says Steinhauer. “It’s so final. In our language, there’s no word for (permanency). It would mean loss or something negative, it’s not positive.”

The Notley government wants to make sure it lines up with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. According to an email obtained by 630 CHED News, permanency committee “symbolically represents a body that is not in keeping with the recommendations arising from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.”

The Notley government is doing consultations with First Nations on several issues, across all government ministries, led by Justice Minister and Solicitor General Kathleen Ganley. Sabir says more changes are on the way in the coming months. Some foster parents have already been told that the “foster to adopt” program is no longer available. It fast-tracked for adoption foster children who were unlikely to return to their families. But a spokesperson for Sabir says “there are no changes to the foster program, and it is still possible for foster parents to adopt.”

Most of all, Steinhauer wants Aboriginal kids to know where they come from.

“We need to be able to meet the kids and meet the foster parents and have a relationship, so I know who these kids are,” says Steinhauer. “A lot of my kids that are under membership of Saddle Lake, I don’t even know them. I’ve never seen them.” (bd)

**Direct Link:** <http://www.inews880.com/2015/10/30/first-nations-optimistic-about-foster-care-changes/>

## **Housing, education key priorities for new FSIN chief**

**Bobby Cameron comes into new role after work on education**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 30, 2015 4:24 PM CT Last Updated: Oct 30, 2015 4:58 PM CT



Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations elected Bobby Cameron as the new chief. (Steve Pasqualotto/CBC)

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) has a new chief: Bobby Cameron of the Witchekan Lake First Nation, who beat out two other candidates for the job.

He's been serving as the organization's second vice-chief, and while that role brought particular challenges for Cameron, his new post will likely carry a whole new host of issues to navigate.



"When you have such a huge, young, growing aboriginal population, the best thing you offer them is safe, affordable housing and education so they can go take their place in Canada." - *John Lagimodiere, Eagle Feather News publisher and editor*

In order to discuss some of the challenges Cameron will face in the role, Eagle Feather News publisher and editor John Lagimodiere joined host Leisha Grebinski on *Saskatoon Morning*.

"I think he entered the race as a favourite," Lagimodiere said, who noted he's not surprised by Cameron's win.

Cameron's large margin of victory — approximately 500 votes — points to organization that is gaining unity, according to Lagimodiere.



Bobby Cameron has been elected chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. (FSIN)

"I think [the FSIN] has come a long way. There was some work that needed to be done at the organization. I think everyone would admit that," he said. "There's a really good energy there."

The newspaper editor said the two biggest issues that Cameron will face as chief are education and housing for the province's aboriginal peoples.

"When you have such a huge, young, growing aboriginal population, the best thing you offer them is safe, affordable housing and education so they can go take their place in Canada," Lagimodiere said. "Those are the two biggest kind of places that have had

hiccups in the last 10 years ... there's been a two per cent cap on First Nations funding for 20 years."

He said capital investments are needed for First Nations education.

As for housing, Lagimodiere noted there's plenty of cases in Saskatchewan of "overcrowding" that need to be addressed and fixed.

"As aboriginal community goes, so does the rest of Canada," he said.

Lagimodiere said he also thinks the new Liberal government, coupled with the current FSIN executive, are in a prime position to deliver on Justin Trudeau's campaign promise of re-establishing nation to nation relationships with Canada's indigenous peoples.

"It elevates the constitutional relationship of the set two groups," he said, part of which enable indigenous peoples to have and keep more control "within their own communities, which is where solutions lie."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/housing-education-priorities-fsin-chief-1.3296292>

## Royal Roads convocation honorees a link to university's past

[Jeff Bell](#) / Times Colonist  
October 31, 2015 04:25 AM



Former Assembly of First Nations chief Shawn Atleo is receiving an honorary degree from Royal Roads University. Photograph By Michelle Siu, The Canadian Press

A First Nations luminary, a health-care leader and a former privacy commissioner are being honoured at Royal Roads University's fall convocation ceremony.

Receiving an honorary doctorate of laws will be Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, a hereditary chief of the Ahousaht First Nation and former national chief of the Assembly of First Nations. He also served as chancellor at Vancouver Island University.

Maj.-Gen. Lise Mathieu will receive an honorary doctorate of laws for her work in transforming Canadian Forces Health Services, while David Flaherty, B.C.'s first privacy commissioner, will be presented with the Chancellor's Community Recognition Award for his philanthropy and support of the arts.

About 690 students from the faculties of management and social and applied sciences will receive degrees, certificates and diplomas at the ceremony, being held Nov. 10 at the Royal Theatre.

Royal Roads president Allan Cahoon said the convocation is one of the last formal events being held as part of the institution's 75th anniversary — 55 years as a naval and military college and 20 as a university. He said there are links between those being honoured and the traditions of Royal Roads.

"There's a connection between the military, the past leadership, our origins in terms of heritage from First Nations land."

Recognizing Atleo singles out not only a man of great accomplishment but also someone with a connection to Royal Roads, where he has been a supervisor for masters students taking indigenous leadership courses, Cahoon said.

"It speaks for itself in terms of why him."

Mathieu, who has also been involved in the leadership program at Royal Road, is being honoured after a 31-year career in the Canadian Forces that included being named a commander of the Order of Military Merit.

Cahoon said Mathieu is a person not often herself in the limelight, but is very deserving.

"She was shocked to think that we would even recognize her," he said.

Mathieu played a key role in the direction the military took in the health field, he said.

"It was moving from the classic kind of tradition of the military having everything of its own to an integrated system that was more responsive to their needs, and then working with larger community partners."

There are many things that make Flaherty worthy of being honoured, Cahoon said, noting that the former privacy commissioner has done many things of note outside of his professional achievements.

“I like to recognize people when they go outside of what they are trained to do, and do something above and beyond.”

Flaherty’s service to the arts includes two terms as president of Pacific Opera Victoria.

“He’s someone who has a variety of backgrounds, from an academic portfolio to freedom of information to philanthropy,” Cahoon said.

The Nov. 10 convocation will have sessions at 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Both can be viewed online at [livestream.com/royalroads](http://livestream.com/royalroads).

See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/news/local/royal-roads-convocation-honorees-a-link-to-university-s-past-1.2100710#sthash.xMylVn0t.dpuf>

## Do aboriginal focus schools help or hurt students?



The Aboriginal School Focus program at Sir William Macdonald Elementary school is now in its fourth year. (Vancouver School Board)

This week, the Vancouver School Board [considered closing](#) its only aboriginal focus school before voting to keep it open until at least 2020. [The school](#) is designed to support aboriginal students by delivering education through a First Nations lens, though students of all backgrounds are allowed to apply.

Many parents and staff at the school are relieved, but Scott Clark, the executive director of the [Aboriginal Life in Vancouver Enhancement Society](#), argues delivering aboriginal programming through focus schools is the wrong approach. He believes focus schools segregate aboriginal students and wants school boards to concentrate on improving aboriginal education across their districts instead.

*The full interview is available in the audio player above. The following portions have been edited for clarity and length.*

**What's wrong with the idea of a separate school designed to give aboriginal youth an education through a First Nations lens?**

There's a couple things that are wrong. One is the research - is there any research that says that segregating aboriginal kids in the urban context is actually good? The second thing is...where is the opportunity for the non-aboriginal population to start learning about aboriginal issues? If we're committed to the concept of reconciliation, then I think we need to start working with all our students in the classrooms and stop segregating aboriginal people into separate programs and alternative schools.

**This aboriginal focus school has been running for a couple of years now. What do you feel aboriginal students aren't getting from this school?**

Well, it's a small school, with a small enrolment, and from what I understand...it doesn't really have the resources that it needs to have to support kids. To me it looks much more like a band-aid approach to trying to address the crisis situation we have here in Vancouver. We need a much more systematic approach, and I think what we need to do is really look at how we build inclusive communities throughout all of Vancouver, and that starts with schools and community centres.

**I think it's safe to say that there's a strong sense that aboriginal children and aboriginal youth aren't particularly well-served by the education system in this country. If this isn't the answer, what alternatives do you suggest?**

What we're seeing with recent research, the [Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study](#), a national study, is that [urban] aboriginal children and family and youth feel very confident, very strong in who they are, and they come to the cities for opportunities, for education, for training, for jobs, housing - like any other person who wants to come to the city. So we need to start opening up opportunities in the broader community... That is a reconciliation process that we advocate for here in Vancouver.

In the urban context - I'm not talking about land-based First Nations, I'm talking the urban context - I don't think academically, in the academic institutions and in government, that we've critically analyzed how we've been operating with off-reserve aboriginal people for the last 50, 60 years. We've just been taking the on-reserve model and posing it in the urban context and just put a bunch of money over there. And what we've done here in Vancouver, and I would suggest elsewhere in large cities, is we've created ghettos for aboriginal people and families, and that's why we see so many negative statistics. Here in Vancouver, we have a pipeline from all over Canada to ultimately end up in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside... We have to start getting in front of these issues, and we need to realize that the model we've been using for the last 50, 60 years shows some results, but I think we can do a lot better.

*Click the blue button above to listen to the full interview.*

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/the180/mmiw-inquiry-debunking-electoral-reform-and-what-is-the-west-1.3295363/do-aboriginal-focus-schools-help-or-hurt-students-1.3296902>

## **B.C falls short of provincial target for aboriginal graduation**

**'Educators need to expect that all aboriginal students will graduate'**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 05, 2015 12:39 PM PT Last Updated: Nov 05, 2015 12:39 PM PT



B.C.'s aboriginal students in ten provincial districts are graduating less than 50 percent of the time, even though the provincial goal has set a graduation goal of 85 percent. (CBC )

B.C.'s aboriginal students are doing better, compared to past decades but school boards still need to do more to foster "non-racist" school environments, said the province's auditor general Thursday.

"There is a pretty consistent gap in graduation rates across Canada," said B.C. Auditor General, Carol Bellringer.

The province set a goal in 2005 to have 85 per cent of aboriginal students graduating by 2015, but with an overall graduation rate of 62 per cent has fallen far short of that goal. In 10 districts in B.C. the aboriginal graduation rate is actually lower than 50 percent.

### **Low expectations part of racist environment**

"Educators need to expect that all aboriginal students will graduate, " said Bellringer in a media conference call Nov. 5, underlining the fact that "low expectations" are also part of a racist environment that needs to change.

The audit examined graduation rates across the province and did find improvements since 2005.

"No we did not reach the 85 percent graduation rate, no," said Bellringer, who blamed the ministry for not better analyzing and utilizing decades of student data performance.

"There is no real understanding of the why it is happening."

The audit of the Ministry of Education recommended:

- The creation of a system-wide strategy.
- The implementation of a more culturally sensitive curriculum.
- School boards moving to intervene if districts consistently fail to serve aboriginal students.
- Less reliance on "completion certificates" for aboriginal students.

Across Canada there is a persistent gap between graduation rates comparing aboriginal and non-aboriginal students.

- 29 per cent of aboriginal Canadians aged 25-64 have not completed secondary school.
- 12 per cent of non-aboriginal people aged 25-64 have not completed secondary school.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/aboriginal-student-education-bc-improvements-racism-1.3306014>

## **Gabriel Dumont Institute**

**Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research  
Multiple Campuses, Sask. | Founded 1980**



A focus on Metis culture is the defining feature of the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research (GDI). The Institute prides itself on being a conservator of



Metis culture—to this end, it holds a large virtual museum of Metis culture and history, with photographs, artwork and textual and oral history records. All its programs have a Metis cultural component, and centre on Native studies, Metis studies and Indigenous languages.

GDI has 11 locations across Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert. It offers apprenticeship programs, adult basic education and university-based courses.

In partnership with the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan, GDI offers a four-year bachelor of education program, the Saskatchewan urban Native teacher education program (SUNTEP). In SUNTEP, students study teaching from a Metis and First Nations perspective, and gain hands-on classroom experience by the time they graduate. Students can also opt to take the first two years of a Metis-focused bachelor of arts and science degree in either Saskatoon or Prince Albert, or a master's program in curriculum and instruction.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.macleans.ca/schools/gabriel-dumont-institute-2/>

## Aboriginal Health

### TNFC exec honoured for promoting Aboriginal health

Friday, October 30, 2015 10:32:32 EDT AM



Veronica Nicholson, left, executive director of the Timmins Native Friendship Centre and this month's NE LHIN Healthy Change Champion, is congratulated by Christine Leclair, the NE LHIN's Cochrane Hub Officer.

**TIMMINS** - Veronica Nicholson has been named a Healthy Change Champion for her work in improving access to care for Aboriginal people living in Northeastern Ontario.

“Veronica contributes strongly to her own organization and to our board’s Local Aboriginal Health Committee, and works in partnership with others to include the values of Aboriginal culture and traditions into today’s health care system,” said Louise Paquette, chief executive officer for the North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN).

Nicholson, who is Anishnawbe from the Michipicoten First Nation near Wawa, has been the executive director of the Timmins Native Friendship Centre (TNFC) since 2004. The centre was established in 1974 to provide a cultural approach to the delivery of services and programs for members of the urban Aboriginal community.

“As an Indigenous service provider, we design programs to provide community-based support to individuals and families as they move through personal growth and family development,” said Nicholson. “These maintain traditions and culture that are inclusive of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual well-being.”

Nicholson believes that knowledge is the key to successful community relationships, particularly in collaborating with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities and organizations.

“It’s important to provide a balanced understanding of historical issues and be adept at enhancing knowledge in a manner that uses humour, kindness and compassion,” she said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.timminspress.com/2015/10/30/tnfc-exec-honoured-for-promoting-aboriginal-health>

## **Horizon asked whether treatment order plans include First Nations**

*CBC – Thu, 29 Oct, 2015*



CBC - Horizon asked whether treatment order plans include First Nations

A new plan to reduce hospitalizations for people with mental illnesses was presented to the board of directors at Horizon Health on Thursday.

Jean Daigle, the vice-president of community for Horizon Health Network, made the presentation.

The new program will feature community treatment orders, which are designed to monitor people with serious mental disorders in the community, rather than see them in a psychiatric facility.

It's being designed by a task force lead by Fredericton lawyer Matthew Tweedie.

During questions from the board, Roxanne Sappier, the health director for the Tobique First Nation, asked if there will be First Nations representation on the task force.

"I'm not sure of the full membership on the task force, but I can assure you that I will bring that back [to the committee]," said Daigle.

When Tweedie's task force was set up, it indicated a First Nations representative would be included.

Sappier said she supports the new program and hopes it will fill gaps in the mental health care system, but it should be inclusive.

First Nations input needed

"I think there is room for First Nations to have input in health care delivery in the province," she said.

"I think that's it's equally important First Nations members make themselves available to participate in those discussions."

Sappier said there is no reason for the province's different populations to work in silos.

"We do have mental illness in all our populations of course across New Brunswick, First Nations are no different, you may even see higher rates, and I think that certainly as a health director at a community level I certainly see the need for mental health services."

The task force is expected to have the community treatment order program working in a year.

Clarification : In an email to CBC News Friday, Bruce Macfarlane, spokesperson for the Department of Health, confirmed there is a representative from a First Nation on the task force. (Oct 30, 2015 8:38 AM)

**Direct Link:** <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/mental-health-task-force-first-002235368.html>

# Unsafe water, housing linked to illnesses

Posted: Saturday, October 31, 2015 6:00 am | *Updated: 6:01 am, Sat Oct 31, 2015.*

The Chronicle-Journal |

Nishnawbe Aski Nation leaders are pointing to recently released research linking water quality and inadequate housing to a growing health crisis on First Nations in the Northwest.

“This research shows that First Nations living in remote communities are severely marginalized when it comes to health care and the basic qualities of life and makes the important connection between the increased prevalence of infectious disease and substandard living conditions in many of our communities,” NAN deputy Grand Chief Terry Waboose said this week.

“Such high rates of infectious diseases are a shocking indictment of a broken health-care system and the normalization of second-class citizenship by First Nations living on-reserve is unacceptable and must be a call for action.”

The latest studies by the Canadian Journal of Rural Medicine have documented an alarming increase in invasive diseases such as methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus and rheumatic fever in remote First Nations. The reports conclude that inadequate housing, lack of safe water and inferior health-care delivery are major contributing factors, NAN says.

In a report released last spring, the Auditor General of Canada concluded that First Nations living in remote communities are severely marginalized when it comes to access and the delivery of health-care services.

NAN said that the Auditor General found that Health Canada did not take into account community health needs when allocating its support, and highlighted Health Canada’s continued failure to address the health-care needs of First Nations.

A summer report by the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, On-Reserve Housing and Infrastructure: Recommendations for Change, also made 13 recommendations for the federal government to make improvements in on-reserve housing, infrastructure and financing, including the removal of the two-per cent cap on annual increases on funding, and development of a housing strategy for remote and isolated First Nations to address specific challenges and building costs.

“The chronic lack of housing and infrastructure has left many NAN First Nations in crisis and it is shameful that Canada enjoys one of the highest standards of living in the world while the majority of our communities are left to suffer in deplorable, sub-standard conditions,” said Waboose, who holds the NAN health portfolio. “Twenty-one of our First Nations have been on drinking water advisories for more than 10 years and nearly

all communities are in need of major upgrades to water and wastewater systems and other critical infrastructure.”

NAN presented recommendations regarding infrastructure needs during the Senate Committee’s 2014 study of First Nations housing and infrastructure on-reserve, including: immediate funding for water and sewer systems for communities at high risk; development and funding of comprehensive community planning to guide development; and elimination of the current piecemeal approach and the development of new ways of administering and evaluating capital funding.

A 2011 report by the Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corp. found that it would cost around \$1.1 billion to meet the water and waste water needs in NAN’s 49 First Nations by upgrading or replacing existing facilities.

**Direct Link:** [http://www.chroniclejournal.com/news/local/unsafe-water-housing-linked-to-illnesses/article\\_d8551974-7f83-11e5-8773-73bdc7a60af.html](http://www.chroniclejournal.com/news/local/unsafe-water-housing-linked-to-illnesses/article_d8551974-7f83-11e5-8773-73bdc7a60af.html)

## **B.C.'s doctor of the year is from the other side of the world, but fell in love with northern community of Fort St. James**

Dr. Anthon Meyer is B.C.’s family doctor of the year

By Glen Schaefer, The Province November 1, 2015



Dr. Anthon Meyer, B.C.’s family physician of the year for 2015, checks a young patient.

B.C.’s family doctor of the year learned to love the snowy winters of tiny Fort St. James after coming to Canada from his native South Africa.

“You know, I think it grows on you,” said Dr. Anthon Meyer, who will be honoured later this month in Toronto along with nine other doctors from across Canada. He first came to Canada in 1999, working in northern Manitoba and Ontario before moving to Fort St. James three years ago.

“As time goes by you get used to it, and you really look forward to the winter, you start skiing. It’s a wonderful lifestyle-recreational community.”

Also along the way, Meyer fell in love with the community and made it his family’s home.

The College of Family Physicians of Canada this year singled out Meyer for his work in establishing a primary care society, involving both the community and health care professionals, to get consistent care to remote rural and First Nations patients.

Fort St. James had one doctor when Meyer came; now there are six physicians and two nurse practitioners.

“I’ve spent all of my career in rural, under-serviced areas, so that’s where my passion lies,” said Meyer, who practised rural medicine as a doctor in South Africa, and saw similarities between the native populations in the two countries.

“Coming to Canada, I met a First Nations population that is disadvantaged, that has got tremendous issues in terms of social determinants of health. That’s where I find connection.”

He recalled working in a northern Ontario community where 400-plus people lived without running water, and which previously had a suicide rate among pre-teen children that was the highest in the world.

In Fort St. James, Meyer is medical director of the Fort St. James Medical Clinic, and practises family medicine and emergency care with Stuart Lake General Hospital.

He launched a chronic disease management program and a medical student mentor program, and got the town’s small hospital approved as a residency training site. As a result, doctors are staying in the town, rather than seeing it as a stepping stone to a big-city career.

“Physicians can see outcome changes in the community, the patients are dealt with differently than before.”

The doctors use video conferencing and other tools to maintain more consistent contact with remote settlements.

“All of this is extremely exciting ... to not only deal with the medicine in front of me but with the person behind that — what can we do to uplift people, change the behaviour patterns, change revolving-door mentality, and build trust relationships.”

The 52-year-old Meyer’s 30-year-old daughter is also a physician and colleague, as is her husband. Meyer said the family will welcome his first grandchild in two months.

“Fort St. James is now my home. I can tell you it has touched my heart as well,” he said. He just extended his contract for another five years, and said he expects to stay longer.

Plans are in the works for a new hospital. “The whole outlook has changed — we have a recent colleague who signed on, who came from Nanaimo. He’s here for the next 15 years. It’s a long-term retention model, with a sustainable service.”

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.theprovince.com/health/from+other+side+world+fell+love+with+northern+community+fort+james/11484847/story.html>

## **November named Aboriginal Disability Awareness month**

Citizen staff / Prince George Citizen  
November 1, 2015 09:37 PM

Aboriginal people with disabilities "often face unique barriers that impact their ability to fully participate" in social and economic opportunities.

That from the provincial declaration naming November as Aboriginal Disability Awareness month.

Social development minister Michelle Stilwell said the month recognizes the barriers Aboriginal people with disabilities can face.

The government, the release said, is working with communities and organizations like British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society to remove those barriers.

"All Aboriginal people living with a disability have the right to enjoy their life to its fullest potential," said its executive director Neil Belanger in a statement.

"Our work ensures the clients we serve have the necessary support to access information, programs and services to help them achieve their goals. Aboriginal Disability Awareness Month is an opportunity to bring attention to the challenges and opportunities that face Aboriginal people living with a disability in B.C. today."



The First Nations Summit and the Metis Nation British Columbia both passed their own resolutions acknowledging the month for awareness.

The announcement is part of the province's 10-year action plan - Accessibility 2024 - to build more inclusive communities.

It borrows from themes that emerged during public consultations in 2013 and 2014, like issues around employment and accessible service delivery.

"All British Columbians have the right to participate fully in their communities and as part of Accessibility 2024, we are working to make all B.C. communities more inclusive and welcoming to people of all abilities," Stilwell said in Saturday's press release.

Added Linda Larson, parliamentary secretary for accessibility, the plan's goal is to make B.C. "the most progressive province in Canada for people with disabilities.

"Aboriginal Disability Awareness Month highlights an important perspective on this work and celebrates the contribution Aboriginal people with disabilities make to our communities."

- See more at: <http://www.princegeorgecitizen.com/news/local-news/november-named-aboriginal-disability-awareness-month-1.2101176#sthash.dgGALQvq.dpuf>

## **First Nations women in BC do not receive the same level of obstetric care: study**

By [Tania Kohut](#) Web Writer Global News  
November 2, 2015 8:55 pm



Researchers have found First Nations women in British Columbia receive lower levels of care during pregnancy than the general population.

There are substantial gaps in obstetrics care between First Nations and non-First Nations women in British Columbia which may contribute to the higher rates of infant mortality among the First Nations population, according to research examining more than a decade of pregnancies and births in the province.

“Across the board, in terms of the things we looked at, we found reduced levels of care,” said researcher and co-author Corinne Riddell, PhD candidate, McGill University.

Researchers examined the obstetrical medical records of all first-time mothers who gave birth in B.C. between 1999 and 2011; researchers compared care during pregnancy, labour and delivery of 215,933 total births, 9,152 of which were to First Nations women.

Researchers said First Nations women were less likely to receive the following measures of care:

- Less likely to undergo early pregnancy ultrasounds,
- Had fewer visits to the doctor during pregnancy,
- Were less likely to receive an epidural or labour induction,
- Less likely to have instrumental delivery or cesarean section births.

What isn't clear was whether the care was not offered or was unavailable, or whether First Nations women were less likely to seek out or follow up on such care.

“We cannot say at all based on this work ... if it was uptake of care or the provision of care.”

What needs to be studied next is why these differences exist.

“We didn't know before this study whether there was lower care or not and so now we can say, OK First Nations women do have lower level of care, receive less care, than the general B.C. population but we don't know why,” said Riddell.

Researchers noted that many First Nation women live in remote areas and the differences in care were adjusted for where the women lived. Also of note, First Nations women were found to be seven times more likely to have a baby during their teens, had a higher likelihood of preterm birth, and were less likely to give birth after 41 weeks.

“The results of this research was surprising,” said Dr. Evan Adams, the B.C. [First Nations Health Authority](#)'s chief medical officer. “Care services for First Nations need to be looked at, and looked at again to make sure that we're reaching everyone that we can so that we're getting as best outcomes as we can.”

Adams said first time mothers in particular can be harder to engage, and that mistrust of medical procedures is sometimes a factor. He acknowledged geographic obstacles often pose a problem, but said it's not an excuse for lack of care.

“I’m concerned that there may be other factors than simply geographical ones that stop people from going into care,” Adams said.

“One of them might be cultural mistrust, some of it might be historical — have they traditionally gone to those kinds of places with an expectation of good care. Are the healthcare professionals culturally competent, can they speak to them in a way that’s reassuring and respectful and entices them to engage in care.”

The health authority has recently started a doula program for First Nations mothers, noting how vital trust and communication is in administering proper care.

“Babies are these innocent gifts that we should give every chance to, all of us,” Adams said. “And it shouldn’t just be given to some and not to others.”

Riddell said the research was prompted by “the established, heightened rate of stillbirth and infant mortality in aboriginal Canadians compared to the general population. So that’s of course of concern, so we wanted to establish if there is also lower levels of care in First Nations women.”

According to Health Canada, studies have suggested the infant mortality rate for the First Nations population to be double that of the general population, however there is not enough firm data to be sure.

“Unfortunately, current Canadian data systems fail to capture a significant number of First Nations infant deaths, resulting in incomplete data on this important indicator — it is therefore not possible to report infant mortality for First Nations populations in Canada,” the health agency [states](#).

The [findings](#), co-authored by Riddell, Jennifer A. Hutcheon PhD, and Leanne S. Dahlgren MD MHSc, were published Monday in the Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ).

**Direct Link:** <http://globalnews.ca/news/2313389/first-nations-women-in-bc-do-not-receive-the-same-level-of-obstetric-care-study/>

## Gay men's 2015 health summit offers First Nations and arts expertise

by [Craig Takeuchi](#) on November 2nd, 2015 at 4:09 PM  
SHARED 45



First Nations Health Authority chief medical officer Dr. Evan Adams is one of many speakers at this year's Gay Men's Health Summit.

The 11th Gay Men's Health Summit is being held this week (at SFU Harbour Centre) and if you haven't registered already, now's the time to do it.

The conference, presented by the Community-Based Research Centre launches on Wednesday night (November 4) with a party at Studio 126 (126 East Pender) from 6 to 8 p.m.

As indicated by the art theme of the opening party, this year, CBRC is ramping up its arts-related content.

A reception and readings on Thursday (November 5) will serve as the launch for three publications.

CBRC blogger Sarah Shown will be releasing *At the Interface: Exploring Theory in the Practice of Gay Men's Health*.

Craig Barron's *Stories and Stigma*, created with a grant from the City of Vancouver's Cultural Arts Program, is a collection of personal experiences of stigma from gay men.

The inaugural edition of *Annals of Gay Sexuality 2015: The Contemporary HIV Zeitgeist* takes an arts-based approach to gay sexual culture. Edited by Robert Birch and Marcus Greatheart have compiled contributions from Europe, the U.S, and Canada. Among them is UBC professor and author [Michael V. Smith](#) (*My Body is Yours*) who will be in attendance.

The main theme of the conference is undoing stigma. That issue will be tackled by a variety of different experts from various backgrounds and communities, ranging from gay youth to HIV and AIDS researchers.

Among the various offerings, attendees will have several opportunities to learn from First Nations expertise and experience.

Aboriginal issues will be addressed by keynote speaker Dr. Evan Adams, First Nations Health Authority of B.C.

He'll be speaking on Friday (November 6) at a session entitled Resisting Stigma: The Impacts of Stigma on Indigenous Sexual health with moderator Olivier Ferlatte of CBRC.

The First Nations Health Authority became the first province-wide health authority of its kind in Canada when it took over from Health Canada's First Nations Inuit Health Branch for the Pacific region in 2013.

Also on Friday, on the panel Communities of Resilience, Sandy Lambert of the Aboriginal HIV & AIDS Community-Based Research Collaborative Centre (AHA Centre) will comment on David Brennan of the University of Toronto's study about resilience among long-term HIV positive two-spirit men in Ontario. They will discuss findings from the Two-Spirit HIV/AIDS Wellness and Longevity Study (2SHAWLS) in Ontario.

Meanwhile, Jared Star of Winnipeg's Rainbow Resource Centre will also be speaking on the panel Gay Youth Fighting Stigma: Initiatives from Totally Outright about how stigma reinforces intragroup isolation within gay, bisexual, queer and two-spirit men in Winnipeg on Thursday (November 5).

The Vancouver Infectious Disease Centre will be participating in the summit for the first time, and they'll be offering three presentations in the program. They'll be presenting information about MSM (men who have sex with men) from the Downtown Eastside, a population that hasn't received much attention.

To register or to find out more information about the summit, visit the [CBRC website](#).

**Direct Link:** <http://www.straight.com/life/569381/gay-mens-2015-health-summit-offers-first-nations-and-arts-expertise>

## Medicine Wheel ways to wellness



Earl Lambert, a Cree Metis Warrior and motivational speaker, opens students and teachers minds with the teachings of the medicine wheel during A Journey Towards Wellness on Oct. 23.

The crowd was emotionally touched by the lessons shared by Cree-Metis Warrior and motivational speaker [Earl Lambert](#) during *A Journey Towards Wellness* on Oct. 23 at Trafalgar Campus.

His talk showed students and teachers a new way to approach wellness through First Nations culture, the teachings of the medicine wheel and how they are applied in their lives.

The medicine wheel is a circle with four different colours, white, yellow, red and black.

The event was organized by the Aboriginal Initiatives Office in keeping with the theme of this year's President's Creative Challenge.

"The Challenge this year is mind, body, spirit, wellness, which doesn't get any more First Nations because that is the medicine wheel," said Paula Laing, a student success and transition advisor for the Aboriginal Initiatives Office.

"I wanted to make sure people knew that's indigenous knowledge and that's our teachings because this is what we do and this is how we live."

Lambert used visual displays and magic tricks to show how the medicine wheel represents the different stages of life, the four sacred elements and the four nations (Africa, Asia, Indigenous and Europeans) reunite in peace and tranquility.

The teachings can also be used to achieve wellness and balance in our lives physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

"If we do not fuel ourselves with food, exercise, take care of our body, nurture the mind, honour the spirit of creation or emotionally express ourselves then we don't feel so good," said Lambert.

"We might feel depressed, lethargic, frustrated or be easy to anger. All these are different ways that imbalance can affect us in life."

The presentation included teachings about finding and knowing your worth, being confident and optimistic, having pride in yourself and not being ashamed of whom you are.

According to Lambert, fear is false evidence appearing real and it is all in your head, but courage is in your heart.

"The thing that grabs me the most about him is that he is so honest and sincere," said Laing. "I like that he says 'I'm an open book, I'm not ashamed therefore I don't have secrets' and that's a big change that's coming in our aboriginal community."



Sera and Robyn Bailey, first-year Social Service Worker students, Kayla Parisien, a first year Social Service Worker, Earl Lambert, a Cree Metis Warrior and motivational speaker, Paula Laing, a student success and transition advisor for the Aboriginal Initiatives Office, Angel Pangowish, a first year Art Fundamentals student and Moh'Ku Sayeed, a second year Social Service Worker Gerontology student.

Whether students and teachers were curious about the medicine wheel and that approach to health or trying to include Aboriginal culture and teachings back into the curriculum, everyone had their minds opened.

"I'm very grateful and glad that Earl was able to make it out and share his story and these very valuable teachings," said Moh'Ku Sayeed, a second-year Social Service Worker Gerontology student.

"I'm going to focus on how I can apply these teachings of the medicine wheel into my life right now because I know I've experienced challenges in those areas of wellness as he spoke to."

According to Lambert, everything is interconnected and it's got to work together because nothing is separate. We are all equal and nobody is better than the other.

"I felt everything he said resonated with the idea that all the worlds and people are coming together and the new youth are saying lets just move on and get along," said Laing.

"No one's perfect, but we're all trying to move forward in the right direction."

**Direct Link:** <http://thesheridansun.ca/blog/2015/11/04/medicine-wheel-teachings-offer-ways-to-achieve-wellness/>

## **Many First Nations communities without access to clean drinking water**

By [Megan Rowney](#) and [Hannah James](#), November 5, 2015 4:10 pm





Most Canadians have never experienced anything other than fresh, clean drinking water at the turn of a tap. But surprisingly, many of Canada's First Nations communities are still without what the United Nations considers a basic human right: access to clean drinking water.

In fact, according to a [report](#) by the Council of Canadians, as of January 2015, there were 169 drinking water advisories (DWA) in 126 First Nations communities across Canada. That represents 20 per cent of all First Nations communities in Canada.

If you break that down by province, Ontario had the highest number of DWAs for Indigenous communities at 79, followed by B.C. with 35, Saskatchewan with 24, Alberta with 17, the Atlantic with seven, Manitoba with five and Quebec with two.

"In 2007, the number of drinking water advisories was around 92-95. Today, it's running around 120 and it's been a steady climb," says Irving LeBlanc, a special advisor on infrastructure for the Assembly of First Nations.

"I think the biggest, really travesty, is a lot of these have been there for over maybe 20 years," he says. "And there's no reason, absolutely no reason why those could not be addressed."

One community in particular, Shoal Lake #40 First Nation, has been on a boil water advisory (BWA) for 18 years. The community of about 250 people has no road access, and has been bringing in bottled water since 1997.



Trina and Ainsley Redsky have lived under a boil water advisory their entire lives

“I think everybody in Canada should have clean water to drink,” says Shoal Lake #40’s Chief Irwin Redsky. “Every community should have it. It doesn’t matter how small.”

Shoal Lake #40 is about 200km East of Winnipeg – a city that, earlier this year, was put under a boil water advisory itself. But that BWA was lifted only three days later – something Irving says is quite the contrast with First Nations communities.

“Dealing with First Nation drinking water advisories just seems to take a long, long time,” he says.

“Municipalities have the resources to deal with [it]. In a [First Nation] community...there’s not going to be an immediate reaction to it. It takes a while to muster the resources, find the money and equipment to deal with it. So there’s a totally different environment or attitude towards drinking water advisories on First Nations.”

Shoal Lake #40 has had to deal with the consequences of that attitude for 18 years.

“A lot of people shake their heads when they come into this community,” says Chief Redsky. “They don’t believe its 2015 here. When you come here it’s like going back in time. It’s not right.”

*16×9’s “As Long as the Waters Flow” airs Saturday, November 7th at 7pm.*

**Direct Link:** <http://globalnews.ca/news/2320937/many-first-nations-communities-without-access-to-clean-drinking-water/>

## **First Nations find out how to bring down the law on bad water**

## Lawyers and policy experts gather today with First Nations people at Centre for Human Rights Research

By Tiar Wilson, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 05, 2015 11:36 AM ET Last Updated: Nov 05, 2015 12:45 PM ET



Three and a half year-old Hailey Sakanee takes a sip of water. Her community, Neskantaga First Nation, has been under a water advisory for two decades. (CBC)



Lawyers and policy experts are gathering today with First Nations people at the University of Manitoba's Centre for Human Rights Research for a workshop that tackles ways to bring the power of the law to the persistent issues of bad water on reserves.

The Centre's director Karen Busby, and Métis lawyer Aimée Craft, received a public grant four years ago to look at finding solutions to best address the problems.

"We had promised in the grant that our work would be really practical, you know, real things that communities could do," said Busby.

"At least half of the people coming to the workshop are Indigenous Peoples so we [will] really try to make sure that we draw on indigenous expertise."

A CBC News investigation last month revealed 20 reserves across the country have had a drinking water advisory longer than 10 years. The numbers show that 400 out of 618 First Nations in the country had some kind of water problem between 2004 and 2014.

The group will examine the different water issues within First Nations communities and see which approach would work best.

One of the lawyers in attendance today is Rosanne Kyle, who helped four Alberta First Nations file a court action asking Federal Court to force Ottawa to upgrade their water systems, provide continuing support to keep them operating safely and to refund money the bands say the government has saved over the years by not doing so.

In other cases, a community's needs is better met by participating in a universal review process in international law.

"It's called universal periodic review, where Canada is asked to appear before a United Nations body to answer a bunch of questions on its human rights records," Busby said.

"First Nations have appeared before those bodies to complain about water in those communities. And we will talk about whether or not that was an effective strategy."

Busby says there are other routes a First Nation could take: make a claim in court for a constitutional law or international law violation or filing a complaint to the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

"So what we really hope comes out of this is we can say, a community that has these qualities would be the best one to file a claim against the federal government for these reasons. And this is the resources we need to do it."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/first-nations-law-bad-water-1.3304769>

## **Aboriginal History & Heritage**

### **'There wasn't a sound'**

Friday, October 30, 2015 2:20:34 EDT PM



Supplied photo A monument commemorating Shannen Koostachin, a young Cree activist from Attawapiskat First Nation, was unveiled earlier this month.

### Special to The Star

A monument commemorating Shannen Koostachin, a young Cree activist from Attawapiskat First Nation, was unveiled earlier this month at the New Liskeard waterfront.

Koostachin led the struggle for a new school in Attawapiskat, and was nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize.

Tyler Fauvelle, a professional sculptor based in Sudbury, created the figurative bronze sculpture, which depicts Shannen dancing in traditional regalia and features symbols reflecting her Cree heritage.

Jules Arita Koostachin, multi-media artist and a relative of Shannen's, led the commemorative project, which included installing butterfly benches near the monument, and the production of a short documentary film.

Kenneth (Jake) Chakasim, lecturer with the Laurentian University School of Architecture, and Rick Miller, an accomplished Canadian photographer and videographer, were part of the project team.

When the only elementary school in Attawapiskat was condemned, and replaced with portable trailers that were cold and mice-infested, Shannen Koostachin led the youth-driven Attawapiskat School Campaign, persistently advocating for a "safe and comfy" school.

The students eventually succeeded, but Shannen didn't live to see it - she was 15 when she died in a motor vehicle accident in 2010.

Family, friends and community started Shannen's Dream, a campaign for decent schools for all First Nations children across Canada, and for quality, culturally-based education.

Shannen's family joined friends and dignitaries to honour and lovingly remember Koostachin. Among the dignitaries were Theresa Spence (former chief of Attawapiskat First Nation), Charlie Angus (MP), and Carman Kidd (mayor of Temiskaming Shores).

The solemn event included a traditional blessing and smudge ceremony.

"I've attended several unveilings of my work," said Fauvelle, "but this one was different. When the bronze of Shannen was unveiled, there wasn't a sound. No one spoke. Then, I saw all the tears, and the quiet smiles. It was an emotional reminder that this proud young activist, admired by so many, had also been a daughter, a sister, a friend."

Fauvelle sculpts in clay and casts his work in bronze. His public art includes commemorations of the Wendat people, John Graves Simcoe, famous prospectors of the Porcupine gold rush, Ukrainian cultural hero Taras Shevchenko, and Canadian folk/country singer, Stompin' Tom Connors.

He is currently working on a life-sized bronze of Francis Pegahmagabow, the most highly-decorated First Nations soldier in Canadian history.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thesudburystar.com/2015/10/30/there-wasnt-a-sound>

## First Nations' contributions to War of 1812 recognized with Georgina plaque



*Brian Charles performs a smudge ceremony during the unveiling of a plaque to recognize First Nations' contributions during War of 1812*

Georgina Advocate

By [Heidi Riedner](#)

A new commemorative plaque unveiled at the Sutton Cenotaph Tuesday honours the contributions of First Nations chiefs and warriors in defending Upper Canada during the War of 1812.

It is one of 10 placed in the territories of the Chippewas of Huron and Lake Simcoe, including Barrie, Cedar Point, Christian Island, Coldwater, Georgina Island, Midland, Orillia and Rama.

“We are hopeful to have one installed at Anchor Park in Holland Landing so that we may share the true history of our ancestors and our fundamental contributions to the history and formation of Canada,” Georgina Island Chief Donna Big Canoe said during the ceremony.

The plaque, which includes a long-lost map discovered at the Simcoe County Archives of the vast territories of Upper and Lower Canada etched in stone, honours the memory and sacrifice of the 10,000 First Nations chiefs and warriors who stood as allies of the British to ensure the defence of Upper Canada during the War of 1812, Georgina Island Councillor Lauri Williamson said.

It was an extremely significant act for the crystallization of what would become Canada, MP Peter Van Loan said, adding it was critically important because of the very thin numbers of British settlers at the time.

Indeed, after U.S. President James Madison signed a declaration of war on Great Britain and its colonies of Upper and Lower Canada, former president Thomas Jefferson wrote the final expulsion of Britain from the American continent would be “a mere act of marching” in the face of a scant 6,034 British American regulars in Upper and Lower Canada combined, 4,400 of which garrisoned at the key stronghold of Quebec.

Maj.-Gen. Sir Isaac Brock was in command of the remaining 1,634 British regulars, with orders to defend all of Upper Canada — a vast territory stretching from modern-day Montreal to Sault Ste. Marie to Windsor to Niagara — from American invasion.

MPP Julia Munro said Canada has a debt to First Nations, who crossed the border and set up as Six Nations and who wanted to be part of the British organization as opposed to the American.

“If you look at the battles that were fought, they were always accompanied by a First Nations segment and I think it speaks very much to the relationship that existed at that time.”

A letter from a member of the Legislative Assembly to the King about the personal sacrifice by ordinary people in the community is what struck her most, Munro added, recounting while British soldiers were sent, they obviously needed the support of the militia, ordinary farmers and the skills of the First Nations.



It also spoke to the incredible hardship endured during what turned out to be a very long and protracted war, of which, we, today, are the beneficiaries, Munro added.

“More people were killed on a per capita basis than in modern wars, which is quite a shock, and quite devastating to the population.”

Georgina Mayor Margaret Quirk acknowledged the importance of the commemoration some 200 years in the making.

“It is a history, it is a heritage and it is something that needs to be recognized. And I think it is very appropriate that we do it in the month of November and prior to Remembrance Day,” said Quirk, adding we all need to remember we come from a community that has many people who have given their lives in service to preserve the freedoms that we all enjoy today.

An honour song, a traditional smudge ceremony and an intricate hand-beaded covenant belt between the British crown and First Nations from 1764 were all part of the unveiling.

“This belt represents that some 50 years later, First Nations were still living up to their end of the bargain and their end of the covenant chain when they chose to stay loyal to the British in the War of 1812 as allies — not as subjects, not as wards of the state, but as allies, nation to nation,” said Brian Charles, who sat with Chippewas of Georgina Island committee members Suzanne Howes and Andrew Big Canoe on the Chippewas Tri-Council War of 1812 committee.

It included members from the Rama First Nation and Beausoleil First Nation who developed a variety of projects during the past three years to honour First Nation warriors.

That includes Georgina Island resident and Waabgon Gamig student Kylie Big Canoe’s prize-winning commemorative stamp and a video entitled In Focus: Remembering Our Warriors.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/6083893-first-nations-contributions-to-war-of-1812-recognized-with-georgina-plaque/>

## **Aboriginal Identity & Representation**

### **4 reasons to leave the 'pan-indigenous' costume behind this Halloween**

By Kim Wheeler, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 30, 2015 6:00 AM ET Last Updated: Oct 30, 2015 6:00 AM ET



If you are not clear on why you should not dress up as an "Indian" this Oct. 31, we have four reasons for you.

Every Halloween for the last few years now, indigenous people have raised concerns about costumed portrayals of the culture.

This year, Kamloops, B.C., social worker Jeffrey McNeil-Seymour, a member of the Tk'emlúps Tes Secwépemc First Nation, called out Halloween Alley for stocking "Chief Many Feathers" and "hypersexualized" female costumes sporting headdresses.

And more and more, non-indigenous Canadians are joining the chorus — like Cindy Freeman, an elementary school teacher from Regina, who spoke out after seeing "Huron Honey" and "Noble Warrior" costumes at her local Spirit Halloween store.

If you are still not clear on why you should not dress up as an "Indian" this Oct. 31, here are four reasons:

## **1. We still exist.**

More and more people are standing up and raising concerns about stereotypical costumes portraying an entire group of people who are still alive today. We don't run around in buckskin, we aren't sexy Indian maidens ... not certain if you noticed or not, but we don't even call ourselves "Indian" anymore in the mainstream.

## **2. Overtly sexualized costumes.**

With more than 1,200 missing and murdered indigenous women on the RCMP's official list, why would you want to sexualize indigenous women in a way that would make them a target?

## **3. Racism.**

If you are dressing up in costumes with names like "Pocahottie," "Sexy Tribal Trouble," "Native American Brave" or "Native American Temptress," you are helping to portray stereotypes — stereotypes that we, as a community, have tried to put behind us.

## 4. Historical inaccuracy.

Throwing on some fake buckskin and fringe isn't exactly accurate. Pan-indigenous people do not exist. There are many nations across North America, and the Mi'kmaq are as different from the Haida as the Irish are from the Polish.

### Some alternatives

So you say you want to honour Indigenous Peoples this Halloween. Then go as Louis Riel, the founder of Manitoba.

Perhaps you want someone more current? How about one of the 10 newly elected MPs in Canada? Winnipeg Centre Liberal MP Robert-Falcon Ouellette would be easy to pull off — suit, purple shirt, tie and a ponytail.

Or sling on a guitar and go as the first lady of indigenous music, Buffy Sainte-Marie.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/4-reasons-not-to-go-pan-indian-this-halloween-1.3294965>

## First Nations urge against wearing offensive 'Indian' Halloween costumes

**Costumes for sale include "Queen of the Tribe," "Native Knockout" and "Reservation Royalty."**

By Marina von Stackelberg, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 30, 2015 10:20 AM ET Last Updated: Oct 30, 2015 10:30 AM ET



One of the many First Nations-inspired costumes on sale at a store in Sudbury. First Nations student Maryan Manitowabi says these kinds of costumes make light of the serious issues First Nations people face in Canada. (Marina von Stackelberg/CBC)

Aboriginal students in Sudbury are urging party-goers to think twice before wearing a First Nations-inspired costume this Halloween.

A Spirit Halloween store in Sudbury has an entire isle dedicated to native-looking costumes for women. Most are short, tan-coloured dresses with fringe, beads and feathers. Some of the titles on the costumes include "Queen of the Tribe," "Native Knockout" and "Reservation Royalty."

The trend is not new, nor is it isolated to Sudbury; these costumes are [for sale across the country](#).

Costumes like these are incredibly offensive, according to Maryan Manitowabi, a grade 12 student at Sudbury Secondary School from Wikwemikong First Nation.

"They're sexualizing it, they're cutting it up, and they're mocking it," she said.

Manitowabi said the costumes make light of what First Nations people face in Canada.

"We already have a problem with missing and murdered indigenous women," she said. "We're already 3.5 times more likely to get raped or sexually assaulted than any other woman in the country, and they're still sexualizing us."



Some of the costumes for sale at the Spirit Halloween store in Sudbury include "Queen of the Tribe," "Native Knockout," "Reservation Royalty," "Noble Warrior" and "Indian Princess". (Marina von Stackelberg/CBC)

## Not honouring a culture

Manitowabi said aboriginal traditional clothing is sacred. Every feather and bead is important and must be earned. That's part of the reason why she finds it so offensive when non-native people wear it as a parody.

"If you want to honour our culture, come to a ceremony, come to a sweat lodge, come to a pow-wow, come talk to one of the elders. Don't dress up as us and dance around."

Sherry-Lee Auger, the aboriginal support worker at Manitowabi's high school, said many of her students were upset to see the costumes being sold.

"We have pride in our culture," Auger said. "We are trying to show others that our culture is really beautiful. And then you have Halloween and you have all these costumes, and it's twisting it all around."

In a statement, Spirit Halloween said it plans to evaluate all elements of its costume program each year.

"It was never our intention to offend anyone's culture or heritage," the statement read. "We appreciate our guests' feedback and are open to dialog with members of the First Nations' community."

As for Manitowabi, she said nobody should dress up like another race or culture for Halloween.

"It hurts. Our whole culture is based on respect. We're trying really hard to rebuild our culture. And they're just kicking us back."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/first-nations-urge-against-wearing-offensive-indian-halloween-costumes-1.3296191>

## **Culture is not a costume, says National Aboriginal Caucus**

Kerry Benjoe, Leader-Post 10.29.2015



Chasity Delorme an FNUniv student and member of the Canadian Federation of Students has created poster called “not your stereotype”. She is asking people NOT to dress in “indigenous-themed” costumes this Halloween.

REGINA — It’s not OK to be Poca-hottie or a Sassy Squaw, says Chasity Delorme.

As the representative for the National Aboriginal Caucus for the Canadian Federation of Students, she is urging last-minute Halloween shoppers to think before purchasing a culturally themed costume.

“We want to educate not only universities, but communities about cultural appropriation and mocking cultures, not just First Nations but other cultures,” said Delorme. “Basically, if a costume is offending somebody it takes the fun out of Halloween.”

To help combat stereotypes the CFS has launched a national poster campaign depicting real images of indigenous people wearing their cultural regalia with the words, This is Halloween, choose respect, It’s our culture not a costume.

It is a spinoff from a photo challenge called #notyourstereotype that she started last year.

She decided to use real images of real people on her poster because she did not want to promote Halloween costumes like Poca-hottie.

“The costumes that are commercialized are based on stereotypes,” said Delorme. “They are totally ridiculous.”

She knows it’s going to take a lot of work to change things, but is up for the challenge.

“I recently watched a newscast and one of the owners of a (costume store) felt there was nothing wrong with having the different cultures displayed as costumes,” said Delorme.



“So that means there’s a lot of work to be done. It’s disappointing, but on a positive note more awareness is being brought to the situation. Whereas in years past, we didn’t have as strong of a voice as we do now.”

Her ultimate goal is to not have the costumes in stores next year, so the work needs to start now, she said.

Sexualizing indigenous women with costumes is also wrong.

“Historically, we covered ourselves from shoulder to toe because of the respect that we had and have for our bodies and that is not depicted in any of the costumes on store shelves,” said Delorme. “Especially with all the other issues out there like our missing and murdered indigenous women, that doesn’t help sexualizing women in that manner.”

She said to add insult to injury many of the costumes are just a combination of indigenous items that make no sense.

“There is one costume out there that is just a headdress, a mini skirt paired with mukluks,” said Delorme. “They just come up with their own I don’t even know what to call them.”

She believes by putting out positive images of indigenous people does help to combat the negative images.

But that goes for any culture whether its First Nation, Metis, Chinese, Japanese or Indian, said Delorme.

More information on the campaign and work by the aboriginal caucus is available online at [www.cfs-fcee.ca](http://www.cfs-fcee.ca).

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/life/culture+costume+says+national+aboriginal+caucus/1481648/story.html>

## **Facebook launches youth safety guide in Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut**

**Think Before You Share responds to language component of TRC recommendations, says Kevin Chan**

By Tiar Wilson, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 04, 2015 12:47 PM ET Last Updated: Nov 04, 2015 2:48 PM ET





Activist Michael Champagne says Think Before You Share guide, translated into three indigenous languages, 'removes stigma of young people learning their language when it has something recognizable like the Facebook logo right beside it.' (Facebook)

Facebook Canada and Media Smarts, Canada's centre for digital and media literacy, launched a resource guide today for youth in Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut languages at the opening of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

The guide was originally developed in English in 2013. It offers teens advice about sharing and making good decisions online.

"The recommendations coming out of the TRC looked at things like language revitalization. And so we are just really pleased that we are able to do our part, our little part to make things accessible to First Nations [and Inuit] communities," said Kevin Chan, Head of Public Policy for Facebook Canada.

## Language key to reconciliation

This past June, the TRC released 94 recommendations, all calls to action. Eight recommendations deal with language.

While the majority were geared toward the federal government, some recommendations called on Canadians in both the public and private sectors.

Chan says Facebook Canada wanted to address some of those recommendations.

"There are a lot of First Nations and other aboriginal communities that are rural and remote ... Facebook is a way for many communities to be connected together," Chan said.

"We realized that if we want to reach out to communities ... that it would be important to translate some [of our guides] to where they are accessible to everyone."

Charlene Bearhead is the Education Lead with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and is equally excited about the language translation.

"Truth and Reconciliation take many forms, on many levels, through the generations in all communities," Bearhead said in a statement.

"The combination of safety in social media and indigenous languages is a powerful way to inspire this reconciliation and reclaiming of self."

## Reaching indigenous youth



Activist Michael Redhead Champagne wants other companies and social media sites to follow Facebook's example of reconciliation, and implement some language revitalization incentives of their own. (CBC)

Indigenous activist Michael Redhead Champagne is Swampy Cree, from the Shamattawa First Nation in northern Manitoba. Champagne, raised in Winnipeg's North End, says he is "super new" to learning the Cree language.

"I am at the very beginning. So I only understand very, very basic things," he said. "Knowing that there's additional language resources coming from places like Facebook, gives me hope that I'll be able to get a better grasp on my language."

Champagne has taken a lead role in talking about suicide prevention within the indigenous community on a national scale through a volunteer movement called Aboriginal Youth Opportunities.

Champagne says initiatives like this have the potential to get rid of negative feelings that indigenous youth continue to grapple with.

"My hope is that the side effect will be a reduction in youth taking their own lives," he said.

'It removes stigma of young people learning their language when it has something recognizable like the Facebook logo right beside it.' - *Michael Redhead Champagne, Cree activist*

He says language is an integral part of indigenous identity.

"As I learn about healing and what was taken from many of our communities and families, I feel like it is my responsibility as a young leader to take [the language] back," Champagne said.

He hopes other companies and other social media sites will follow this example, and implement some of the TRC recommendations.

"It removes stigma of young people learning their language when it has something recognizable like the Facebook logo right beside it," he said.

"Especially when it comes to safety and the well being of our young people."



"Saving our language and culture is our priority," says National Inuit Youth Council President, Maatalii Okalik. (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami)

The National Inuit Youth Council President, Maatalii Okalik, agrees that by making those tips available in Inuktitut, it helps bridge the gap not only between mainstream Canada but across Inuit territory.

"With the majority of our 53 communities being disconnected geographically and fly-in only, having the ability to communicate with family, friends, fellow Inuit and people of the world through Facebook is important," she wrote in a statement. "Saving our language and culture is our priority."

That is something that Facebook is starting to recognize, says Chan.

"We hope to look at this and potentially do more in the future," he said. "Certainly we've had lots of stakeholders ask us about this."

The new guide was developed with support from Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN).

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/facebook-launches-youth-safety-guide-in-cree-ojibway-and-inuktitut-1.3302828>

## **Inuit throatsingers steal the show at Justin Trudeau's swearing-in ceremony**

**Samantha Metcalfe and Cailyn Degrandpre broke into giggles at Rideau Hall**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 04, 2015 2:13 PM CT Last Updated: Nov 05, 2015 3:00 PM CT



Two young Inuit throatsingers stole hearts Wednesday morning as they performed during the Justin Trudeau government's swearing-in ceremony.

Samantha Metcalfe and Cailyn Degrandpre of Ottawa, both 11, broke into giggles after each of two rounds of throatsinging in front of Canada's Governor General and the new prime minister, Justin Trudeau.

Traditional Inuit throatsinging is a performance and type of contest where two women/girls face each other and make sounds to imitate animals or their surroundings. Whoever laughs first, loses.

The girls' performance ended in a draw.

"I lost that first round," said Samantha.

"But then on the second round, I messed up on the speech I was trying to do in the throatsinging and then I started laughing," said Cailyn.

The two girls are loving the attention they've been getting on social media, especially from Polaris Prize-winner Tanya Tagaq, a throatsinging idol of theirs.

"Even Tanya Tagaq tweeted about us," said Cailyn.

"It was so cool."

Carla Turner says she discovered the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre as a place for her daughter Cailyn to learn about her culture when she moved to the city. The girls learned to throatsing in the afterschool program.

She watched from home on TV as her daughter performed Wednesday.

"I was crying, I was so overjoyed watching them get excited. They were just being themselves."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/inuit-throatsingers-steal-the-show-at-justin-trudeau-s-swearing-in-ceremony-1.3304148>

## **Aboriginal Inequality & Poverty**

### **Projets autochtones du Québec constructing shelter in Montreal for aboriginal community**

**Construction of the multi-level building is underway in the Ville-Marie borough**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 31, 2015 7:18 PM ET Last Updated: Oct 31, 2015 7:19 PM ET



The new refuge on de la Gauchetière Street will be able to house 70 people at once. (CBC)

A Montreal shelter specifically adapted to the needs of the aboriginal community is slated to open in March 2016 to the tune of \$7 million.

Organizers of the project said that it was difficult to find a location in the city.

Radio-Canada reported that Projets Autochtones du Québec considered 37 different locations before finding a piece of land in the Ville-Marie borough. The organization is expanding a shelter that already exists.

Construction has already started at the de la Gauchetière Street location, located two steps away from the CHUM.

The project has received support from both Mayor Denis Coderre and the opposition Projet Montréal.

## **Centre will offer emergency support and transition space**

"With this new project, men and women will be on different floors, with a communal space," said Adrienne Campbell, director of the Projets autochtones du Québec.

The centre will be able to accommodate about 70 people at a time — double the number it could previously hold.

It will offer both overnight emergency services and transition spaces for those who need time to get back on their feet.

"There will be more services adapted to their culture, to their knowledge and their way of life," Campbell said.

## **Homelessness on the rise**



According to Matthew Pearce, head of the Old Brewery Mission, there's a growing number of homeless people who are aboriginal in Montreal.

He said Inuit people who come from the north to seek medical services in the city sometimes don't make it back to their communities.

"We have to adapt services so that they are at their best and so that they speed up getting them off the street to rehabilitation," Pearce said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/new-shelter-for-aboriginal-people-in-montreal-1.3298605>

## Mi'kmaq chiefs urge MPs to join welfare fight

ANDREW RANKIN CAPE BRETON BUREAU

Published November 3, 2015 - 9:02pm

Last Updated November 4, 2015 - 8:50am

Federal policy change could see benefits cut in half



MP Roger Cuzner: 'We'll be looking at the broader issues facing these communities and moving forward together from there.'

Cape Breton Mi'kmaq chiefs are hoping their MPs will join them in their fight to prevent the federal government from cutting social assistance rates for First Nations people.

The five Cape Breton chiefs are scheduled to meet with Cape Breton-Canso MP Rodger Cuzner and Sydney-Victoria MP Mark Eyking in Membertou on Monday.

The Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs [lost a four-year court battle over the proposed changes last month](#), when the Supreme Court of Canada granted the federal government power to amend First Nations social assistance rates in line with provincial rates. The new rates are scheduled to take effect in April.



Rod Googoo, We'koqma'q chief, is among a chorus of Mi'kmaq community leaders calling for the process to be halted. Googoo, who will attend Monday's meeting, hopes Eyking and Cuzner are on side.

"The difference is two million dollars, and that's on the backs of the poorest of the poor," said Googoo.

"What we're saying is, 'Look, we need a moratorium right now.'

"You can't be making decisions without consultation which are going to have a huge negative impact on our people. All the bands in the Atlantic region will be affected negatively by the changes."

Googoo said the assembly is concerned that First Nations communities won't have access to essential housing and job training assistance currently available for people on provincial social assistance. The group is looking to create its own governing body to administer social assistance rates and programs.

"We have to sit down and work toward a self-government agreement like the way we govern education ourselves. We can implement essential programs on our reserves, such as training, child care, housing assistance.

"We're not saying leave things the way they are. We want to put in place something that will work for our communities."

Cuzner was noncommittal to that idea. He said he hadn't received any agenda items in preparation for the meeting.

"We'll be looking at the broader issues facing these communities and moving forward together from there."

Naiomi Metallic, a lawyer with Burchells LLP in Halifax who has represented the Mi'kmaq during their four-year court battle, told The Chronicle Herald in March that the policy change could mean First Nations people would see their welfare funds cut nearly in half.

The collective unemployment rate for Cape Breton First Nations communities stands at 65 to 70 per cent, said Googoo.

"The Trudeau government committed to working with us nation to nation. Let's work together to improve the lives of our people."

**Direct Link:** <http://thechronicleherald.ca/novascotia/1320556-mi%E2%80%99kmaq-chiefs-urge-mps-to-join-welfare-fight>

# Aboriginal women's transitional housing returns



*Honouring the Circle, a transitional home for native women, is set to re-open by December.*

Hamilton Spectator

By [Carmela Fragomeni](#)

Honouring the Circle, the transitional housing shelter for homeless aboriginal women that closed in June for lack of funding, should be back in business again by December.

Lisa King, Hamilton-Wentworth chapter president of the Native Women's Association, said it is securing funding from several sources to reopen the transitional supports and housing next month.

The chapter runs both the Native Women's Centre, a 15-bed emergency shelter for women fleeing violence, and Honouring the Circle, a transitional refuge helping women make the change from shelter to permanent housing.

Honouring the Circle has 45 beds, but it is unclear how many women can be housed in the reopened venue initially.

"We'll be expanding pretty rapidly," says King however.

"It's exciting. We got funding to start bringing in staff. We've applied for funding from many different programs. This will create employment and ease the pressure on other city shelters."

King didn't have a firm figure on funding secured so far but said the women in transitional housing do pay a rent minimum out of the government social assistance they receive.

The Honouring the Circle building on the Mountain is currently open for events and activities, but is unable to house women until at least December, said Native Women's Centre director Cindilee Ecker-Flagg, because the association is still in the process of hiring staff.

Meanwhile, a charity walk-a-thon sparked by the Honouring the Circle closure in June, takes place Sunday at Gage Park. Moc Walk, started by McMaster University aboriginal students, aims to raise money for Hamilton aboriginal women needing financial assistance to attend post secondary education or learn a trade.

The goal is to raise \$10,000 — for a \$1,000 award each to a McMaster and a Mohawk College student, and \$500 for a female trades student, plus \$500 each for three Native Women's Centre clients, and the rest used to sustain the fund, said McMaster geography and environmental studies student Victoria Bomberly.

Bomberly, the walk's lead co-ordinator, said this assistance is really needed.

"Financially, as a (single) parent, I paid \$1,000 a month for child care — and that is a huge burden to bear when you're already paying about \$7,000 for tuition," she said.

Bomberly is glad Honouring the Circle is returning.

"I'm super excited ... obviously with truth and reconciliation, we know our people are on a healing journey and our women need culturally appropriate supports," she said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thespec.com/news-story/6083911-aboriginal-women-s-transitional-housing-returns/>

## Aboriginal Jobs & Labour

### First Nations and industry both benefit from trades program

By Alex Macpherson, The Starphoenix October 29, 2015



Little Pine First Nation member Millie Thunder, who graduated from a program designed to connect First Nations people with careers paths in the trades, is working as a pipefitter in CIMS Limited Partnership's Saskatoon warehouse.

Millie Thunder never imagined giving up her desk job for a career as a pipefitter, until she heard about a new pre-apprenticeship program for First Nations people interested in the trades. "I wanted something better," said Thunder, a member of the Little Pine First Nation. "I was living from paycheque to paycheque, you know? It was pretty difficult."

After she was accepted into the CIMS First Nations Engagement Initiative, Thunder completed an eight-week course meant to familiarize new tradespeople with industrial safety. Then the 43-year-old mother of five began working toward her red seal, or journeyperson's designation through CIMS Limited Partnership, a western Canadian firm with offices in Saskatoon that contracts unionized labourers for projects.

Thunder has since worked at several job sites, including Agrium's Vanscoy potash mine. Although it will take four years - 7,200 hours of hard, physical work - to earn her red seal, she is eager to keep going.

"It gave me a good feeling that I'm going to be working toward something stable," she said of the program. "I'm going to be working toward a good-paying job that's going to help my kids, my family have a better quality of life."

The program Thunder went through was sponsored by CIMS Limited Partnership, the Saskatchewan Ministry of the Economy, the Gabriel Dumont Institute and the Saskatoon Tribal Council and local labour organizations.

CIMS Saskatchewan general manager Todd Verbeke said the idea emerged in 2014, after he noticed that more than half of the roughly 600 workers contracted by the company lived outside Saskatchewan. He wondered why more First Nations people didn't find careers in the trades.

"I knew firsthand about some of the challenges they faced - educational, cultural - to get into the working environment," Verbeke said, noting that he began his career in the trades working uranium mines in the north.

"But I also worked side by side with some of them, and really enjoyed that time, and it very much shaped by views on the subject."

Verbeke said his position at CIMS allowed him to transform the idea into a meaningful program. Because each successful applicant will eventually join a local union hall, it benefits not only CIMS but every company and community in need of skilled tradespeople, he said.

"We basically trained 10 people who are not our direct employees," he said. "But we got them into the mix, into the system."

Verbeke said he hopes people like Thunder encourage other young aboriginal people to turn to careers in the trades.

Saskatoon Tribal Council vice chief Mark Arcand agreed, noting that Saskatchewan's First Nations population has been historically under-represented in the trades.

"Why would we bring in other people from other countries when we have a population of First Nations people in Saskatoon and Saskatchewan, people that are looking for jobs?" he said. "All we have to do is get them trained up."

Arcand also agreed that the program will benefit First Nations people and communities across the province.

"The bottom line to all of this is, wherever they're working - and it doesn't matter where they're working - they're making a difference in their families' lives," he said. "That's the most influential thing that could have happened through this program."

Meanwhile, Thunder is busy working as a pipefitter at CIMS' Saskatoon warehouse. Although she is several years away from earning her red seal, her new career has already made a difference in her life. She hopes it can make a difference in other First Nations people's lives, too.

"More of this stuff needs to happen," Thunder said. "Other companies need to take notice of CIMS, and make sure that they take that initiative to help other First Nations people to get their foot in the door in the trades."

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/life/first+nations+industry+both+benefit+from+trades+program/11476190/story.html>

## **MLA decries low number of Inuit managers at Nunavut power utility**

### **Two of 29 QEC manager jobs held by beneficiaries**

THOMAS ROHNER, November 04, 2015 - 6:59 am



Tununiq MLA Joe Enook says the Qulliq Energy Corp. doesn't hire enough Inuit in middle and senior management jobs. (FILE PHOTO)

Inuit representation within the Government of Nunavut's workforce is unevenly distributed, with many more beneficiaries working lower-paying jobs than higher-paying jobs.

And that might be most apparent at the Qulliq Energy Corp., where a meagre two of 29 middle and senior management jobs are filled by beneficiaries, Tununiq MLA Joe Enook told MLAs Nov. 2 in the Nunavut legislature.

As Nunavut MLAs entered their third week of their 2015 fall sitting, Enook took QEC minister Keith Peterson to task on the energy company's low Inuit representation numbers.

"It's perfectly clear to me that the [QEC] needs to be significantly more aggressive in promoting Inuit employment. Does the minister agree?" Enook asked.

"I have met with the [energy company's] board of directors on three or four occasions and every time we've discussed that... there should be more Inuit employment encouraged through internal programs and training," Peterson replied.

"We are actively encouraging Inuit employees to look at QEC as a place to begin or continue their career."

Under Article 23 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the GN is obligated work towards a "representative level" of Inuit, reflecting the ratio of beneficiaries to non-beneficiaries in the territory.

That population ratio currently sits at about 85 per cent of beneficiaries to 15 per cent non-Inuit.

In its most recent data, released in December 2014, the GN revealed that its current workforce of roughly 4,500 employees comprises roughly [50 per cent Inuit](#) — up from 44 per cent in 1999.

But Inuit employed by the GN are not evenly represented across different types of jobs: beneficiaries fill about 24 per cent of middle management positions and about 21 per cent of senior management jobs.

By contrast, [88 per cent of administrative jobs](#) are held by beneficiaries.

In the assembly, Enook pressed Peterson for a "clear explanation as to why the QEC has such low number of Inuit beneficiary employees in management positions."

"I can't provide a clear explanation," Peterson replied.

"People can pursue career opportunities at QEC... When management positions are opened, they're advertised."

In the energy company's current corporate plan, its Inuit Leadership Development Program aims to "increase employment" for Inuit "at the professional, management and senior management levels," Enook said, quoting the corporate plan.

"Can [the minister] confirm how many participants are currently enrolled in this program as of today?" Enook asked as his final supplementary question.

"I believe there are at least two Inuit beneficiary employees in that program," Peterson said.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674mla\\_decries\\_low\\_number\\_of\\_inuit\\_managers\\_at\\_nunavut\\_power\\_utility/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674mla_decries_low_number_of_inuit_managers_at_nunavut_power_utility/)

## Aboriginal Politics

Monday, November 2, 2015

### **Aboriginal affairs among biggest outstanding policy issues: Jody Wilson-Raybould**

OTTAWA - A former Assembly of First Nations regional chief-turned-federal MP says she's confident the Liberal government can reshape Ottawa's strained relationship with Canada's Aboriginal Peoples.

Jody Wilson-Raybould, who was elected last week in the riding of Vancouver Granville, says aboriginal affairs remain among the biggest public policy issues that must be addressed.

"I certainly look forward to being part of a team that moves this important agenda piece forward," said Wilson-Raybould.

The Liberal MP, considered by some to be a possibility for Justin Trudeau's cabinet, says she wants to see a partnership created between the federal government and First Nations.

Wilson-Raybould says she encountered a lack of engagement when she was regional chief and that must change.

"What we are looking at is forging a relationship that's based on having a partner in the federal government and us partnering with the Indigenous Peoples of this country to develop joint solutions and assisting in moving forward in true reconciliation."

The Liberals have promised the road toward reconciliation will involve greater funding for First Nations education and an inquiry on the number



of missing and murdered aboriginal women in Canada.

As the new government tackles the problems, people must be mindful of the strained historic relationship between the Crown and First Nations, Wilson-Raybould says.

"I think that relationships are hard and need to be worked on," she said. "Trust is built over time and certainly that's something we are committed to doing."

As an aboriginal leader, Wilson-Raybould said she honed her skills of diplomacy and became known for her ability to build consensus.

"I sought to ensure voices were heard and that we built on the successes that our communities and individuals had," she said. "It is a world without political parties, a world where there are complex and often controversial issues on the table."

Wilson-Raybould believes she can bring bridge-building skills to caucus and to Parliament on policy issues such as the environment.

As far as a cabinet role is concerned, Wilson-Raybould would only say she would be "happy to serve at the pleasure of the prime minister" if she is offered a front-bench position next week.

The former B.C. Crown prosecutor was among First Nations leaders who met with Prime Minister Stephen Harper during the Idle No More protests in January 2013.

Those talks, which were strongly opposed by a number of chiefs across Canada, took place before a backdrop of dramatic aboriginal unrest and a high-profile First Nations hunger protest in Ottawa.

Wilson-Raybould, who left the discussions with a bitter taste in her mouth, says a lack of co-operation from the Conservative government influenced her decision to run for the Liberals.

She is one of eight aboriginal members of the new Grit caucus. -CP-

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.theturtleislandnews.com/daily/maile\\_r\\_stories/nov022015/Aboriginal-affairs-among-biggest-outstanding-policy-issues-Jody-20110215.html](http://www.theturtleislandnews.com/daily/maile_r_stories/nov022015/Aboriginal-affairs-among-biggest-outstanding-policy-issues-Jody-20110215.html)

## **Jody Wilson-Raybould says Liberals will make 'true reconciliation' with Aboriginal Peoples**

**Former First Nations regional chief and MP-elect seeks joint solutions to mend relations**

By Kristy Kirkup, The Canadian Press Posted: Oct 30, 2015 9:58 AM ET Last Updated: Oct 30, 2015 4:34 PM ET



Newly elected MP and former Assembly of First Nations B.C. regional chief Jody Wilson-Raybould says the Liberal government will work to mend strained relations with Canada's aboriginal peoples. (Jody Wilson-Raybould/Twitter)

A former Assembly of First Nations regional chief-turned-federal MP says she's confident the Liberal government can reshape Ottawa's strained relationship with Canada's Aboriginal Peoples.

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"What we are looking at is forging a relationship that's based on having a partner in the federal government and us partnering with the Indigenous Peoples of this country to develop joint solutions and assisting in moving forward in true reconciliation."

The Liberals have promised the road toward reconciliation will involve greater funding for First Nations education and an inquiry on the number of missing and murdered aboriginal women in Canada.

As the new government tackles the problems, people must be mindful of the strained historic relationship between the Crown and First Nations, Wilson-Raybould says.

"I think that relationships are hard and need to be worked on," she said. "Trust is built over time and certainly that's something we are committed to doing."

As an aboriginal leader, Wilson-Raybould said she honed her skills of diplomacy and became known for her ability to build consensus.

"I sought to ensure voices were heard and that we built on the successes that our communities and individuals had," she said. "It is a world without political parties, a world where there are complex and often controversial issues on the table."

Wilson-Raybould believes she can bring bridge-building skills to caucus and to Parliament on policy issues such as the environment.

## **'Happy to serve'**

As far as a cabinet role is concerned, Wilson-Raybould would only say she would be "happy to serve at the pleasure of the prime minister" if she is offered a front-bench position next week.

The former B.C. Crown prosecutor was among First Nations leaders who met with Prime Minister Stephen Harper during the Idle No More protests in January 2013.

Those talks, which were strongly opposed by a number of chiefs across Canada, took place before a backdrop of dramatic aboriginal unrest and a high-profile First Nations hunger protest in Ottawa.

Wilson-Raybould, who left the discussions with a bitter taste in her mouth, says a lack of co-operation from the Conservative government influenced her decision to run for the Liberals.

She is one of eight aboriginal members of the new Grit caucus.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/aboriginals-liberal-wilson-raybould-1.3296163>

## **First Nations chiefs meet to keep pressure on Justin Trudeau's government**

**400 chiefs invited to meet on Tsuut'ina Nation near Calgary to strategize over Liberal government**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 02, 2015 5:30 AM MT Last Updated: Nov 02, 2015 11:29 AM MT



Kevin Littlelight says a summit of chiefs at Tsuut'ina Nation is intended to hold the federal Liberals to their election promises to First Nations. (CBC)

The Liberal election platform promised a number of things to Canada's First Nations and the Tsuut'ina Nation wants to make sure the party keeps its word.

To that end, the nation bordering Calgary's southwest corner has invited over 400 chiefs representing treaties 1 through 11 for a strategy summit. Those treaties cover areas in every province and territory west of Quebec.



The First Nations' strategy summit began with a traditional drumming performance. (Dave Gilson/CBC)

"We're getting organized to say, 'OK, this is how we want to begin dialogues with the new federal government,'" said Kevin Littlelight of the Tsuut'ina Nation.

As the meeting got underway Monday, Chiniki Nakoda First Nation Chief Aaron Young said the change in weather bodes well.

"The snow today is a sign of renewal," he said.

**'Exciting times for aboriginal leadership'**

From a promised inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women to education funding, the gathering is intended to maintain pressure on a government Littlelight says is a marked improvement over the Conservatives under Stephen Harper.



Tsuut'ina Chief Roy Whitney says his community is excited for a new chance to have a constructive dialogue with Ottawa. (Dave Gilson/CBC)

"It's exciting times for aboriginal leadership because they have a government that has warmed up to the aboriginal voters, that has warmed up to the aboriginal issues without compromising the general movement of Canada," he said.

"It's no longer us and them, it's all of us, aboriginal Canadians and Canadians in general, we all need to head down a positive future for Canada."

This meeting is a preliminary gathering to determine how to move forward, and it's not known how many of the 400 plus chiefs are attending, although Littlelight says they expect about half.

The October election saw huge increases in First Nations voting, with some communities registering increases of over 270 per cent, as well as a record 10 indigenous MPs elected. It represents a new level of engagement.

Tsuut'ina Chief Roy Whitney says his community was excited to work toward implementing change, and the summit is the next step in that direction.

"What we want to do is just energize the opportunity to have dialogue with government," he said. "The previous government certainly wasn't open to dialogue. It was what it was, for whatever reasons."

## **Missing and murdered woman a key issue**

While there is no priority issue on the agenda, Littlelight highlights the need for an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women as critical for First Nations and Canada as a whole.

"There's just too high of rates of violence against women and that's one of the things that, you know, women, regardless of what society they're in, they're the backbone of a lot of cultures and we've got to strive to protect that," he said.

Traditionally, the Assembly of First Nations has represented Canada's indigenous communities to the federal government, but Littlelight says this gathering has the support of the AFN.

"How that works with the AFN is there's a big portion of them who are treaty individuals or treaty nations, so I don't want to speak for them, but I know that they're supportive of it," he said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/tsuutina-summit-liberal-promises-1.3299109>

## First Nations hold Trudeau to 'nation to nation' promise

By Jason Warick, The StarPhoenix November 1, 2015



Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde says Justin Trudeau should make good on his promise to treat First Nations on a 'nation to nation' basis.

If Prime Minister-elect Justin Trudeau wonders how to honour his historic promise of building “nation to nation” relationships with Canada’s indigenous peoples, a growing contingent of First Nations academics, legal minds and leadership is eager to help.

“I think it was a really strong statement, but it’s critical that (the promise) is more than symbolic. We need to start defining it ourselves,” Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Chief Perry Bellegarde said.

Saskatchewan Cree lawyer Sharon Venne, a key player in the crafting of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, agrees.

“First Nations people need to get together to say, ‘This is what needs to be done,’” Venne said. “If Trudeau wants to honour and implement the treaties, this must be more than symbolic.”

The election campaign promises by Trudeau, similar to those of NDP leader Thomas Mulcair and Green Party leader Elizabeth May, include recognizing indigenous rights and working in partnership.

“We will immediately re-engage in a renewed nation-to-nation process with Indigenous Peoples to make progress on the issues most important to First Nations, the Métis Nation, and Inuit communities — issues like housing, infrastructure, health and mental health care, community safety and policing, child welfare, and education,” reads the Liberal platform.

Trudeau, due to be sworn in as prime minister this week, also promised to meet with aboriginal leaders “each and every year.”

Bellegarde said First Nations signed treaties with the Crown as a way of sharing the land and resources in exchange for health care, education and other conditions. Those promises were not honoured, and First Nations are now treated like a lower form of government.

“Nations sign treaties. We weren’t meant to be poor in our homelands,” Bellegarde said, noting the inadequate funding First Nations receive for schools, social housing, infrastructure and other basic needs.

The relationship has soured even further in the last decade as Prime Minister Stephen Harper “took a wrecking ball” to the rights of indigenous people, said University of Saskatchewan Indigenous studies associate professor Priscilla Settee, who has worked with indigenous peoples across the world.

Settee said there’s no reason to start from scratch. The treaties provide a blueprint, as do examples of nation to nation relationships in Peru and other countries. She’s hopeful, but wants to see some signs of progress soon.

“Until we see a plan from all partners, it’s just rhetoric,” she said.

Venne said many people doubted that experts and politicians from around the world could agree on a universal set of rights for indigenous people, but they did. Today, the UN declaration is cited by indigenous groups in dozens of countries as they assert their inherent rights.

“They thought it was going to take decades. We did it in four years,” Venne said.



Bellegarde, new Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) Chief Bobby Cameron and others say it's not only about "giving" more funding to First Nations. If resource revenue sharing or other models could be explored further, First Nations would have more revenue to devote to public services and wouldn't need to depend on the federal government.

The concept of "nation" will have to be defined as well. At last week's FSIN assembly, delegates welcomed Trudeau's pledge and discussed how to best proceed. Some said each of the more than 600 First Nations in Canada were sovereign and have a right to deal with the Crown individually. Others said that's not practical, proposing bigger units such as treaty areas, linguistic groups, provincial federations or tribal councils.

Settee said First Nations will need to overhaul their governance structure, which has adopted too many bad habits of their colonizers. Women will need a more prominent voice, as will youth.

"We also need to look at how we do things, because it's not working," she said. "We can be creative."

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/life/first+nations+hold+trudeau+nation+nation+promise/11485218/story.html>

## **What roles could Aboriginal MPs play as they head to Ottawa**

[Nation to Nation](#), [National News](#) | November 2, 2015 by [APTN National News](#)



***Doug Cuthand***  
***Special to APTN National News***

There has been a seismic shift in the land. The old colonial minded Conservative government has been defeated and a breath of fresh air is sweeping across Indian country.

Ten Aboriginal members of Parliament, eight of them Liberals, will go to Ottawa with the hopes and dreams of their constituents that meaningful change will now take place. This new crop of young, well educated leaders represent generational change in Indigenous politics.

They are the most members of Parliament elected in our history and the pressure is mounting on Prime Minister designate Justin Trudeau to deliver on the Aboriginal file.

With all the talk of the new educated Aboriginal MPs comes talk of cabinet posts and what role the Aboriginal caucus can play. There has even been some speculation that the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development could be an Aboriginal MP.

I have no doubt that this would be a big mistake. The Department of Aboriginal affairs, formerly the Department of Indian Affairs should more honestly be called the Colonial Office. This moribund department is charged with administering the Indian Act.

The departmental officials play a quasi-political role as Indian agents and overseers. First Nations budgets are inadequate and negotiated on a take it or leave it basis. The former Conservative government instituted a series of rewards for bureaucrats who reduced spending by lapsing funds and Aboriginal Affairs was one of the most enthusiastic departments. Over five years Aboriginal Affairs lapsed over a \$billion in social service funds. They also lapsed capital dollars and cut funding to First Nations governments.

Saddling an Aboriginal person with the job as minister for this nest of vipers would be a recipe for disaster.

Instead Trudeau should appoint a senior person with cabinet experience to go into the department with a chainsaw and a bullwhip and clean house. This Colonial Office is the product of a century and a half of government's failed Aboriginal policies and they should clean it up themselves.

Some possible choices revolving around are Bob Nault or Carolyn Bennett. Nault held the position before from 1999 – 2003. He introduced the First Nations Governance act that was roundly criticized by First Nations leaders. His appointment this time would be viewed as back to the future and he would be seen as a retread.

Carolyn Bennett is a former family physician with cabinet experience in the Martin government. She held the position of Aboriginal Affairs critic in opposition and is familiar with the issues.

She might also be Trudeau's choice for Health minister.

In spite of what you might think of the Harper government, he set the bar for Aboriginal cabinet participation. Leona Aglukkaq, an Inuk from Nunavut was appointed as minister of Health and later Environment, two important high profile positions. And Peter Penashue, Canada's first Innu cabinet minister was the [Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs](#) and [President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada](#) from 2011 until he was forced to quit because of election spending irregularities in 2013.

Also, we have a long history of Aboriginal people appointed to cabinet. The first Cabinet minister was Len Marchand from Kamloops and who was also the first Minister of the Environment.

Of the eight Aboriginal members of Parliament, three have been touted as potential cabinet ministers.

Jody Wilson Raybould, a former AFN vice chief from British Columbia could take on Health or Employment and Social Development.

Robert Falcon-Ouellette, another possible choice from Winnipeg, has expressed his concern for social issues, Employment and Social Development might be a good fit for him. The Environment portfolio would also be a good fit for an Aboriginal member of Parliament.

Hunter Tootoo, from Nunavut, was the former speaker in the Nunavut legislature. It would be a positive step in Parliamentary decorum if an Aboriginal person was Speaker of the House. British parliamentary democracy is built on confrontation. The belief is that out of conflict comes forward motion. Indigenous politics on the other hand is built on consensus with the belief that leaders must work together to achieve results.

I realize this would be a revolutionary concept for the Canadian Parliament and it would be frustrating for the Speaker, but it might just be an idea whose time has come.

Yvonne Jones from Labrador has experience in both Provincial and Federal politics. In the last parliament she was the vice chair of the Public Accounts committee. While she may not have the profile of the newly elected MPs she has experience and has paid her dues.



Michael McLeod represents the North West Territories and heads to Ottawa with ten years of experience in the Legislative Assembly of the North West Territories Council where he served as Minister of Transport and Public Works. He too has the potential to take on a cabinet position in the Federal government.

The remaining three members of the aboriginal caucus, Dan Vandal, Van Badawey and Don Rusnak all have experience in local government and will no doubt make a contribution.

But the role of members of Parliament is not limited to cabinet posts. There are positions such as Parliamentary secretaries, committee chairs and even writing private members bills. Individual members can also play an important role educating caucus members and opening doors for their constituents.

In any event I expect that the growing Indigenous caucus will have a positive effect on the workings of Parliament and their presence will lead to greater aboriginal involvement in all level of politics.

*Doug Cuthand* is a freelance writer based in Saskatoon and Little Pine First Nation.

**Direct Link:** <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/11/02/what-roles-could-aboriginal-mps-play-as-they-head-to-ottawa/>

## **Chiefs hopeful Liberal government will improve relations with First Nations**

**'Now we just continue to build on this new opportunity and move forward,' says Tsuu T'ina Nation chief**

By Erin Collins, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 03, 2015 3:00 AM MT Last Updated: Nov 03, 2015 3:00 AM MT



Traditional drumming opens the chief's summit in Calgary. First Nation chiefs gathered to discuss their priorities in dealings with the incoming Liberal government. (Erin Collins/CBC)

Unfit housing, chronic water-quality worries and lack of consultation are just a few of the issues a group of First Nations leaders want to see on prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau's priority list as his cabinet is sworn in later this week.

The Tsuu T'ina Nation on Calgary's southwestern edge hosted a meeting on Monday to discuss how to work with the newly elected Liberal majority government.

Perry Bellegarde, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, says he is looking forward to better dialogue with the new Liberal government.

Bellegarde didn't say whom he hoped to see in the aboriginal affairs portfolio — but he did say he hoped to see more indigenous representation in decision-making.

"We have always stated that the more often that we can get indigenous people around decision-making tables, that's really in the best interests of Canada — and decision-making tables, that means cabinet."

Eight of the Liberal MPs in the newly elected government have aboriginal heritage, and Bellegarde said they each have strengths, experiences and backgrounds that would bring a lot to the table.



Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde hopes that productive nation-to-nation talks can begin soon. (Erin Collins/CBC)

The incoming Liberals made a number of promises to First Nations in their election platform, like promising to stabilize spending on reserves and spending [\\$2.6 billion on First Nations education during their first term](#).

The party also made a commitment to an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.

## **'Build on this new opportunity'**

Tsuu T'ina Nation Chief Roy Whitney called the summit meeting a chance to keep First Nations issues on the front burner.

He hopes the relationship between First Nations and the federal government under the Liberals will improve after nearly a decade dealing with a Conservative government in Ottawa.

"The previous government certainly wasn't open to dialogue. You know it was what it was, for whatever reason, and I think now we just continue to build on this new opportunity and move forward."

A number of pressing issues for Canada's First Nations came up during the meeting:

- Better communication and renewed nation-to-nation talks on everything from treaty rights to revamping the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.
- More cash is needed for key areas like housing, health care and clean water.
- An even playing field for funding education on and off reserves across Canada.
- An inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.
- Scrap C-51: The Conservative's controversial anti-terrorism legislation is seen as a way of limiting legitimate protest over things like pipelines on First Nations land.

Chief Germaine Anderson of Alberta's Beaver Lake Cree First Nation said she would like to see more consultation before new policies are introduced by the federal government.

"There's never any consultations. All these policies come down, they don't talk to us, but they know our problems."

## Concerns on each reserve vary

For Anderson, the biggest problem facing her reserve is a lack of housing.

"There is a shortage and the houses that are there are getting really old and you know some should be condemned, but people have no choice but to live in them," she said.



Tsuu T'ina Chief Roy Whitney says there are many priorities, but he would like to see better communication right away. (Erin Collins/CBC)

Sitting nearby, Chief Brenda Joly of the Kehewin Cree First Nation nods her head. While housing is also a problem on her reserve, Joly said water is her top issue.

"We have our lakes and they are supposed to be clean, but we don't have that drinking water available anymore, clean drinking water, like we have to get our water from town. We have to buy bottles," she said.

Siksika Chief Vincent Yellow Old Woman's biggest concern hits closer to home.

"We need to do something, we need to push hard — you know — we have a niece that's missing too."

Yellow Old Woman says he would like to see the federal government move quickly to establish the promised inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.

"We want answers. We want to find out just exactly what is going on. I've always said one missing aboriginal lady is one too many, and we need to find the answers," he said.



The inquiry is one of a number of issues that Bellegarde believes are crucial, including fixing the fiscal framework between the federal government and First Nations and lifting a two per cent cap on funding increases for First Nations programs.

"That two per cent funding cap, that has been in place for about 20 years, is really a cap on potential and a cap on growth."

Trudeau is set to announce his choices for cabinet on Wednesday.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/first-nation-chiefs-trudeau-calgary-1.3300744>

## **Time seems right for first indigenous Aboriginal Affairs minister, but some fear it would be mistake**

[Joseph Brean](#) | November 2, 2015 10:34 PM ET



Jody Wilson-Raybould, the Liberals' native star in Vancouver, is touted to be the next Aboriginal Affairs minister.

Some cabinet appointments are symbolic of a government's vision, like environment and justice. Some are scrutinized with a Kremlinologist's eye, like finance.

Some are all this and more, and when Justin Trudeau reveals his cabinet Wednesday, no posting will be as thoroughly fraught as the office charged with giving full life to the Indian Act, one of the abiding political controversies of Canada.

His pick for Aboriginal Affairs will be watched especially closely not only for the acrimony between the outgoing Conservative government and Canada's First Nations, but also because of Trudeau's emphasis on aboriginal reconciliation, his promise for a nation-to-nation approach, and possibly also his Haida tattoo.

The new cabinet also offers a rare possibility, that after decades under the ministry of white men (and two white women), the former “Indian Affairs” might for the first time be headed by an Indian, even perhaps an Inuk.

“It’s going to be the first indicator. Not necessarily who was selected, but the priority it’s given,” said Patrick Smith, director of the Institute of Governance Studies at Simon Fraser University.

There are several possible candidates, thanks to the election of a record 10 indigenous MPs, of whom eight are Liberal and two NDP. Their constituencies span urban, rural and northern ridings, but their fortunes were buoyed by a national spike in aboriginal voting aimed broadly at getting rid of the Conservative government, along with its Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt, who lost in New Brunswick.

That means aboriginal Canadians are a constituency that deserves to be acknowledged, and the idea of an indigenous minister of Aboriginal Affairs has caught on. Hayden King, director of the Centre for Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University, offered a humorous poll on Twitter about who will be the minister, with both options being Jody Wilson-Raybould, the Liberals’ native star in Vancouver.

But the possibility of an indigenous minister raises dangerous potential for conflict between the duties to serve the government, to represent one’s constituents, and to serve one’s people. As a point of law, the Aboriginal Affairs minister represents the Crown, not aboriginal people.

For the government, it might carry the whiff of tokenism, of symbolism outweighing substance on a crucial government file, or the pigeonholing of indigenous MPs.

As the writer and broadcaster Wab Kinew put it, recalling comments he has heard, just like you do not appoint a general to defence or a doctor to health, you do not appoint an indigenous person to aboriginal affairs.

“That same logic might apply,” said Kinew, associate vice-president of Indigenous Affairs at the University of Winnipeg. “One of my friends shared this with me, they said being a native Indian Affairs minister would be like being a police officer in your own community. On the one hand, you’ve got a job to do, but you’re tasked with laying down the law, and you may alienate people you have a longstanding relationship with in the service of your duty.”

Smith said a key thing to watch for will be whether the new minister is on the cabinet’s priorities and planning committee — as Valcourt was — which will offer a better chance to turn Trudeau’s campaign pledges into reality.

As a result, Smith said he expects it will go to someone with a bit of “heft,” a Liberal with long-established political standing who can set an authoritative tone on a complex and perilous file, perhaps a woman to lighten those burdens of history.

Kinew acknowledged Robert-Falcon Ouellette of Winnipeg is a long shot given his youthful inexperience, but said choosing him would send a message that “hey, the future is young, indigenous people.” There is also Dan Vandal, who is Métis and also from Winnipeg, and Hunter Tootoo from Nunavut, both experienced politicians new to Ottawa.

Smith said familiarity with First Nations advocacy and governance is a strong point in favour of Wilson-Raybould, a former Crown prosecutor and AFN regional chief, who was inspired to federal politics by the Harper government’s response to the Idle No More protests. But fronting the Aboriginal Affairs ministry could force her into advocating what she once criticized, or vice versa.

“If things go sideways, that would be the shortest political career you could imagine,” Smith said.

Kinew also sees her as a candidate, but would prefer to see her in a “mainstream” portfolio. “She may burn through her political capital in her own community on some issues which I do expect will continue being very difficult,” he said. “And so if that is going to be a very difficult file, then why almost sacrifice one of the very promising up and coming indigenous leaders to that? Why not put them in a role where they can develop and gain experience and then be positioned to do good things in the future?”

**Direct Link:** <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadian-politics/time-seems-right-for-first-indigenous-aboriginal-affairs-minister-but-some-fear-it-would-be-mistake>

## **Lack of aboriginal candidates for Yellowknife council concerns advocate**

**2 council seats should be set aside for members of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, says Iris Catholique**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 03, 2015 6:37 AM CT Last Updated: Nov 03, 2015 6:40 AM CT



Iris Catholique, project director for Dene Nahjo, an advocacy group that promotes indigenous leadership, says she wants to see more aboriginal people on Yellowknife city council. (Dene Nahjo)

It's been more than 15 years since Yellowknife had an aboriginal city councillor, and in last month's municipal election there wasn't a single aboriginal candidate — even though about one in four Yellowknife residents are aboriginal.

"Why aren't there more aboriginal people running?" asks Iris Catholique, the project director for Dene Nahjo, an advocacy group that promotes indigenous leadership.

"I think they have to be involved. And that means they have to participate."

Catholique says increasing aboriginal representation on council could help solve the issues facing that community.

"They have to sit in those positions. They have to be the councillors. They have to be the mayors. They have to be the MLAs."

Catholique says she'd like to see the city should set aside two seats for members of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, on whose traditional territory the city lies.

"They have insight and history here more than anybody else in the city, so I think it's really important to have them sitting at the table."

Yellowknife Mayor Mark Heyck says that's an interesting idea but he is not sure if territorial legislation would allow that. The mayor says city council has a good relationship with the First Nation.

"Virtually every committee of council we have, almost all have seats designated for a representative nominated by the Yellowknives Dene First Nation," he says.

But Heyck says he doesn't know why aboriginal residents don't often run in Yellowknife municipal elections.

"I think we'd like our council to be a reflection of the community," he says.

"You know, personally I'd be perfectly happy to have more indigenous people running for council but ultimately that's their choice."

With the territorial election coming up on Nov. 23, Catholique's organization is holding a two-night candidates forum focusing on indigenous issues Wednesday and Thursday at the Tree of Peace Friendship Centre.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/aboriginal-candidates-yellowknife-city-council-1.3300584>

## Hopedale's AngajukKak resigns, blames infighting on council

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 03, 2015 8:00 PM NT Last Updated: Nov 03, 2015 8:00 PM NT



Jimmy TuttauK was first elected as angajukKak, or mayor, of Hopedale in 2014. (Leah Balass/CBC)

The AngajukKak (mayor) of Hopedale, Jim TuttauK, has resigned from his position, blaming personal attacks and infighting on council for his departure.

"I put it down to differences between me and council. I find I had lack of support from my council on some issues," TuttauK told *Labrador Morning*.

TuttauK said the major conflict was between himself and another councillor.

"[I was] being sniped at by one individual for the past 13 months, trying to ask me to resign just about every time, and trying to find a way to get rid of me," said TuttauK.

"There's probably some personal differences there."

## **Inuit issues**

Tuttauk said the rest of council should have supported him, an Inuk, over the other councillor who, he said, is not Inuit.

"What I'm extremely upset about is that a non-[Nunatsiavut] beneficiary that comes on to our council can try to bring down the entire ICG [Inuit Community Government]," said Tuttauk.

"That goes against my grain and my beliefs on being an aboriginal."

Tuttauk said he doesn't believe that being Inuit should be requirement to hold a councillor post.

"We should have some support for Inuit. When a non-beneficiary got a problem there, the council should stand up for the elected official. When I believe I'm correct, I'd like to have some support."

The CBC contacted the councillor in question. His name is Melvin Hurley and he has no comment at this time.

## **Community in trouble**

Hopedale is in the midst of significant challenges — the community has been in [a state of emergency](#) since March over water shortages.

Tuttauk said his departure may slow down progress solving that, and other, issues.

"To some extent I believe, but I don't think it's [going to] stop everything," said Tuttauk.

"One thing I will say to the people that elected me, I am extremely sorry to put my community in this position at this time."

Tuttauk said his last day on the job is Friday, although he didn't rule out running again when an election is called.

He held the position for little more than a year after being elected in Sept. 2014.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/mayor-hopedale-resigns-1.3301969>

## **Justin Trudeau's pick for Aboriginal Affairs will set tone for next 4 years**

By Susana Mas, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 04, 2015 7:56 AM ET Last Updated: Nov 04, 2015 8:17 AM ET



Canada's next prime minister Justin Trudeau unveils his new cabinet today. (Adrian Wyld/Canadian Press)

Prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau's pick as minister responsible for government relations with Métis, Inuit and First Nations will be closely scrutinized on Wednesday when his new Liberal cabinet is unveiled.

A record [10 aboriginal MPs](#) were elected to the House of Commons, eight of them in the Liberal caucus.

Trudeau's choice to lead a "renewed, nation-to-nation relationship" with aboriginal communities will set the tone for the next four years.

Appointing an aboriginal MP to the role would be historic, but having aboriginal MPs in cabinet is seen as important to fulfilling his promise for an improved relationship between the Crown and Aboriginal Peoples.



Robert-Falcon Ouellette won't be a part of Justin Trudeau's cabinet. (CBC)



"We have always stated that the more often that we can get Indigenous people around decision-making tables, that's really in the best interests of Canada — and decision-making tables, that means cabinet," [said Perry Bellegarde](#), the national chief for the Assembly of First Nations.

Outgoing prime minister Stephen Harper appointed several aboriginal MPs to his cabinet over his near-decade in office, including Leona Aglukkaq, the first Inuk minister, and Peter Penashue, the first Innu to serve in cabinet.

Newly elected Liberal MP [Robert-Falcon Ouellette](#), who beat longtime NDP incumbent Pat Martin to represent Winnipeg Centre, will not be in Trudeau's cabinet.

That leaves seven aboriginal MPs as possibilities:

- Yvonne Jones (Inuit) - Labrador.
- Michael McLeod (Métis) - Northwest Territories.
- Vance Badawey (Métis) - Niagara Centre, Ont.
- Don Rusnak (Anishinaabe) - Thunder Bay-Rainy River, Ont.
- Hunter Tootoo (Inuit) - Nunavut.
- Dan Vandal (Métis) - Saint Boniface-Saint Vital, Man.
- Jody Wilson-Raybould (Kwakwaka'wakw) - Vancouver-Granville, B.C.

The Assembly of First Nations gave the Liberal Party's platform near-perfect marks days ahead of the election when it released [its assessment of the four main federal parties' platforms](#).

Trudeau's minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs will be expected to move forward with the following Liberal promises:

- To launch a national public inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women within 100 days.
- To [invest \\$2.6B for First Nations education](#) and immediately lift a two per cent cap on federal funding for First Nations programs.
- To [end boil-water advisories](#) on First Nations reserves within five years.
- To repeal those sections of the Anti-terrorism Act that are "cause for concern" to aboriginal people.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/justin-trudeau-s-pick-for-aboriginal-affairs-will-set-tone-for-next-4-years-1.3302757>

## **Justin Trudeau signals new approach to relationship with indigenous people**

## **Ceremony included recognition of traditional Algonquin territory and performances from indigenous children**

By Connie Walker, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 04, 2015 4:34 PM ET Last Updated: Nov 04, 2015 11:34 PM ET



The first sign that this government is taking a new approach to its relationship with indigenous people came when Theland Kicknosway, a 12-year-old Cree drummer, led the way into Rideau Hall today for the swearing-in of Justin Trudeau and his cabinet.

There has been indigenous participation in the past, but today's ceremony was clearly meant to symbolize a new relationship with indigenous people and the government of Canada.

The Cree boy's song ended and was quickly followed with an acknowledgement the gathering was on traditional Algonquin territory.

The ceremony also featured giggling Inuit throat singers [who stole the show](#) and wrapped up with three Métis jiggers.

Two indigenous ministers were sworn into Trudeau's cabinet: Jody Wilson-Raybould (Kwakwaka'wakw) was named minister of justice; and Hunter Tootoo (Inuit) is the new minister of fisheries and the Canadian Coast Guard.



Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Carolyn Bennett is sworn-in during the ceremony at Rideau Hall. (Chris Wattie/Reuters)

But perhaps the most symbolic change was the renaming of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs to Indigenous and Northern Affairs.

The new minister is longtime aboriginal affairs critic Carolyn Bennett, who held an eagle feather and a braid of sweetgrass as she was sworn in.

Hayden King, professor of Indigenous governance at Ryerson University, says the name change will be welcome in the indigenous community.



Cree drummer Theland Kicknosway, 12, leads the procession into Rideau Hall before Justin Trudeau is sworn in as Canada's 23rd prime minister. (Chris Wattie/Reuters)

"Obviously Trudeau wants to be sensitive to indigenous people and the name change reflects a change in approach — it's adopting our language. In that sense it's hard to critique the change."

King said the term indigenous has become preferred over aboriginal.

"I think indigenous is a term that actual native people, indigenous peoples, originated themselves. It comes from us as a people, so I think that's one reason that people prefer it."

"Aboriginal is kind of a status, legal, domestication of indigenous concerns, whereas indigenous or indigeneity is kind of sovereigntist, more authentic term used by indigenous people themselves."

A video of Theland's drumming posted on Facebook quickly gained thousands of views and shares.

And many of the comments contain the word hope.

But King is not convinced the symbolism will result in the "real change" that Trudeau has promised indigenous Canadians.

"Everybody wants to be hopeful. I want to be hopeful, I want to be optimistic, but I am a student of history and my reservoir of cynicism is deep. There do seem to be some positive signs, but at the same time, we know what is going to happen."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/justin-trudeau-signals-new-approach-to-relationship-with-indigenous-people-1.3304234>

## Hopeful indigenous reaction to Justin Trudeau's cabinet picks

### 2 indigenous MPs appointed to cabinet posts

By Tiar Wilson, [CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 04, 2015 5:14 PM ET Last Updated: Nov 04, 2015 9:56 PM ET



Assembly of First Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde says Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's appointment of two indigenous MPs to cabinet is a "new era of reconciliation."

"I was very impressed with the opening ceremony, but even more impressed that out of eight aboriginal members of Parliament that were elected, two have made it into cabinet," said Bellegarde.

"It sends a powerful statement about inclusion and it sends a powerful statement about the reconciliation that is going to be required in rebuilding a new relationship between Canada and Indigenous Peoples."

Jody Wilson-Raybould was appointed justice minister, while Hunter Tootoo becomes the minister of fisheries and the Canadian Coast Guard.

"One of the most important things is to start rebuilding the relationship we have in a co-operative and a collaborative manner," said Bellegarde.

Carolyn Bennett's appointment as indigenous and northern affairs minister was also welcomed by Bellegarde.



Veteran politician Ralph Goodale was named minister of public safety and emergency preparedness. First elected to Parliament in 1974, Goodale served as leader of the provincial Liberal Party throughout the 1980s, returning to the House of Commons in 1993 as the MP for Regina-Wascana, where he has been re-elected ever since. Goodale has served as minister of agriculture as well as natural resources, finance, public works and government services. (Chris Wattie/Reuters)



"She's been the critic, she knows the issues, she knows the file, she knows the priorities, so it's not a huge learning curve for her. She's ready to jump in and begin the task of closing the gap.

"I had a brief meeting with her there, right at the grounds ... she said, 'Let's get to work Chief'"

That kind of hopeful reaction is sweeping through the country among indigenous people.

## **Jody Wilson-Raybould in critical role**

Tanya Kappo, a lawyer and activist from the Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation in Treaty 8, calls Wilson-Raybould's position a strategic one.



Jody Wilson-Raybould is the new minister of justice. She is shown here speaking to media in 2012 when she was the B.C. regional chief for the Assembly of First Nations. (Sean Kirkpatrick/Canadian Press)

"She's an indigenous woman who will be heading up the Justice Department which I expect would have a critical role in how the [murdered and missing indigenous women] inquiry rolls out or shapes up," she said.

Kappo was instrumental in mobilizing the Idle No More movement in 2012 and has always pushed for an inquiry.

"It really speaks to some of the desires of the communities about having indigenous women lead the inquiry."

Stewart Phillip, grand chief of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, shares the view that Wilson-Raybould's role will be crucial.

"I think that work will proceed very very quickly, but the other issues of housing, homelessness and poverty are certainly issues that will also be something the Trudeau government will need to focus on," Phillip said.

"Not to mention the multitude of outstanding justice issues and repairing the damage of the unilateralist legislative government of the Harper government that was so oppressive and repressive and disrespectful to the indigenous rights of this country."

## **Hunter Tootoo a 'good fit'**

Lori Idlout, a law student from Iqaluit, is a fan of Hunter Tootoo's leadership skills.



Lori Idlout, a law student at the University of Ottawa, has a passion for making sure Nunavut's needs are met and is optimistic about Tootoo's appointment. (Submitted by Lori Idlout)

"I really hope that he represents what our realities are in the North and the Arctic, because fisheries is still not considered an important issue," Idlout said.

She believes through Tootoo's new position, he could change Nunavut's status in terms of being a "marginalized economy."

Nunavut Premier Peter Taptuna said Tootoo is a "good fit" for the cabinet appointment. "He's got experience in that and time will tell. Of course, we will be helping him along and meeting with him on a constant basis and I'm sure we'll be working very well together," said Taptuna.

## **Carolyn Bennett a 'strong advocate'**

Phillip is also impressed with Bennett being sworn in as the indigenous and northern affairs minister.

"I believe she has an understanding and a passion for a lot of the issues," he said.



Phillip said that as former aboriginal affairs critic, Bennett spend a lot of time on the ground with both grassroots people and politicians.

"I recall during the Idle No More movement and more particularly Chief Theresa Spence's hunger strike, Carolyn Bennett pretty much spent a lot of time with Spence and was deeply involved in what that represented."



Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Carolyn Bennett is sworn in at Rideau Hall. (Chris Wattie/Reuters)

The head of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission also took notice of Bennett's involvement over the years.

"She's been a strong advocate for the work of the commission as we were going along," Justice Murray Sinclair said.

"She was at our release of our summary report [in June] so I think overall it's a good day for reconciliation in Canada because I think this will be something that will be high on her agenda."

## **'Temper our expectations'**

While Kappo calls the move to appoint two indigenous people to cabinet a strategic one, she maintains a sense of skepticism.



Tanya Kappo was instrumental in the Idle No More movement in 2012. She is optimistic about the appointment of two indigenous people to cabinet. (Tanya Kappo)

"We are always very mindful now of whether or not them being indigenous in that position actually makes a difference for us," Kappo said.

Kappo was referring to former Conservative MP Leona Aglukkaq, who held two cabinet posts. In 2008, she was appointed minister of health, and in 2013 she became minister of the environment.

"It didn't make a difference in regards to the priority of the indigenous people of the North," Kappo said.

"When the concerns came out around the environment and the omnibus bills it wasn't relevant that she was an indigenous person," she said.

"I am always willing to give them a chance to see if they will hold true for indigenous interests in advancing our agenda or if they will have to end up to toe the party line."

Former Assembly of First Nations national chief Phil Fontaine is a Liberal Party member and helped on the campaign trail.

"I watched the swearing-in. It was exciting, bold moves," Fontaine said. "It's going to become a more inclusive department. It's going to be a ministry that serves the interests of all Indigenous Peoples."

But Fontaine offers words of caution for his own community.

"We have to be careful, at least on our part, the indigenous community — that we temper our expectations somewhat, so that we give the government the time and space to do its job."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/aboriginal-leaders-react-cabinet-choices-1.3303972>

## Incoming Indigenous Liberal MPs aiming for impact in Trudeau government

[National News](#) | November 3, 2015 by [Julien Gignac](#) |



***Julien Gignac***

***APTN National News***

OTTAWA — Indigenous MPs in the Liberal caucus are looking to leave their mark on the Justin Trudeau government no matter what assignments they receive following Wednesday's swearing-in ceremony.

Trudeau and his cabinet will be sworn-in during a ceremony at Governor General's residence of Rideau Hall on Wednesday morning.

Nunavut's MP Hunter Tootoo, a former speaker in the territory's legislative assembly, said the eight Indigenous MPs in the Liberal caucus will make a difference no matter their eventual roles.

"As aboriginal people we're starting to make our mark, we're here, and we want to contribute," said Tootoo. "'I'm very proud and honoured to be representing the people of my territory. We are here to stay and we are not going to be left out.'"

Tootoo said he wants to focus on improving the northern food subsidy program, Nutrition North, which came under a critical glare after APTN cameras caught elders in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, foraging in the local dump for food.

"We want to make the program more open and transparent, ensuring that the actual consumer receives benefit of the program," he said. "We made a commitment."

Tootoo and Jody Wilson-Raybould, a former Assembly of First Nations regional chief and Crown prosecutor from British Columbia, are expected to be handed cabinet roles, according to a published report in the Toronto Star.

Another MP touted as a rising Liberal star is Robert-Falcon Ouellette who took the Winnipeg Centre riding from long-time NDP MP Pat Martin. Ouellette said he has already been hard at work, scheduling meetings in his riding and reaching out to allies “who can push our country in a direction we think it needs to go in.”

Ouellette said he wants to focus on issues like poverty, child and family services, housing and public transit.

“If you just simply have a hope, it’s like having a full breakfast and an empty supper,” he said. “What we need is that hope and hard work and action that is going to lead to the long term success of more people.”

Ouellette said he believes that many Indigenous issues affect the wider population.

“We shouldn’t see it as us versus them, it’s us all together,” he said.

Don Rusnak, who took the Thunder Bay-Rainy River riding for the Liberals, said he is looking forward to getting to work in Parliament, but knows it won’t be easy.

“I know it’s going to be hard work,” said Rusnak, whose riding includes 10 First Nation communities.

Rusnak said justice issues are close to his heart and he wants to work on forging a new relationship between Ottawa and First Nations.

“I don’t know what that looks like,” he said, “but it has to be a conversation and the only way to have that conversation is to build those relationships.”

Rusnak says the “top-down” approach used by the former Conservative government will be discarded.

“Ultimately, it’s going to be grassroots and leadership that decides what that relationship is going to be,” he said.

Rusnak said the Indigenous diversity in the Liberal caucus will position the government to better handle the different issues faced by Indigenous peoples across the country.

“We need the voices in there to make sure the issues of other regions are heard and brought up because I may not know what’s happening in Nunavut, but I know what’s happening here,” he said.

A total of 54 Indigenous candidates ran for office in the Oct. 19 election. The NDP elected two Indigenous MPs including incumbent Romeo Saganash, who retained the Abitibi-Baie-James-Nunavik-Eeyou riding in Quebec.

The Chief Electoral Officer of Canada has ordered a judicial recount in the northern Saskatchewan riding narrowly won by Indigenous NDP candidate Georgina Jolibus. Jolibus won the Desnethes-Missinippi-Churchill River riding from Liberal candidate and former chief Lawrence Joseph by 71 votes.

**Direct Link:** <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/11/03/incoming-indigenous-liberal-mps-aiming-for-impact-in-trudeau-government/>

## Trudeau gives Canada first cabinet with equal number of men and women

[Jessica Murphy](#) in Ottawa

Wednesday 4 November 2015 21:54 GMT Last modified on Thursday 5 November 2015 16:55 GMT

Canada's new prime minister [Justin Trudeau](#) has named a young and ethnically diverse cabinet, with a ministerial team that for the first time in the country's history is equally balanced between men and women.

The ministers – 15 women and 15 men – are mostly aged under 50, in a team marking both a generational change and a commitment to reflecting Canada's diversity.

"It's important to be here before you today to present to Canada a cabinet that looks like Canada," Trudeau, 43, told reporters on Wednesday soon after he was officially sworn-in as the country's 23rd prime minister – the [second-youngest in its history](#).

Asked to explain his gender parity promise, he answered: "Because it's 2015."

Many of the incoming female ministers have been given key roles, including former journalist Chrystia Freeland – now in charge of international trade – and Maryam Monsef, who fled Afghanistan as a refugee 20 years ago and will oversee the democratic reform portfolio.

Trudeau's cabinet also includes two aboriginal members of parliament and three Sikh politicians.

But the prime minister also included some of the Liberal party's old guard, putting former party leader Stéphane Dion in foreign affairs and giving one of his closest advisers, MP Dominic LeBlanc, the role of government leader in the House of Commons.

Trudeau is the son of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, one of Canada's most recognizable and longest serving prime ministers. But he said he wasn't reflecting on his father's legacy during Wednesday's swearing-in.

"My thoughts today – sorry Dad – aren't mostly on him, they're very much on my own kids and the kids across this country that we are going to work very, very hard for to ensure they have a better future," he said.

An MP since 2008, Trudeau led the centrist Liberals to [a resounding victory in October's federal election](#), replacing Stephen Harper's Conservatives, who held power for nine years.

The mandate gives him the opportunity to undo some of the former prime minister's record, including amending sections of controversial anti-terror legislation and [pulling Canadian forces out of the US-led coalition against Islamic State](#).

In a dig at his predecessor, Trudeau promised cabinet members would have significant independence with their files.

"Government by cabinet is back," he said.

Harper was known for centralizing power around the prime minister's office during his tenure and dominating the policy decisions being implemented by his own ministers.

Trudeau had repeatedly promised his government would be more open and transparent than the previous one.

That promise extended to Wednesday's swearing-in, as hundreds of people took up the Liberals' open invitation to watch the ceremony on large screens set up on the grounds of Rideau Hall.

Eschewing the customary black cars that carry soon-to-be ministers to the doors of the official residence of Canada's governor-general, Trudeau and his family and the new cabinet arrived on the grounds in a bus.

Trudeau later greeted the crowds and took selfies with fans lining the long driveway to the entrance of the governor general's official residence.

During the ceremony, cheers from the crowd came in support of some of his cabinet picks, including for new justice minister Jody Wilson Raybould, a former Crown prosecutor and First Nations leader from British Columbia.

The portfolios of a number of newly appointed cabinet ministers will demand immediate attention as the Liberals push to quickly follow through on their campaign commitments.

Immigration minister John McCallum will oversee the Liberal campaign promise to bring 25,000 Syrian refugees into [Canada](#) by the end of this year.

Catherine McKenna, a lawyer by training, will join Trudeau in Paris at the end of the month for the COP 21 conference as the new minister of environment and climate change.

And indigenous affairs minister Carolyn Bennett, a longtime Liberal MP who has worked extensively on First Nations issues, will oversee the implementation of a national inquiry into the cases of [hundreds of missing and murdered indigenous women](#).

**Direct Link:** <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/04/canada-cabinet-gender-diversity-justin-trudeau>

## **How Justice Minister Wilson-Raybould could change Canada-aboriginal relationship (no pressure)**

By [Anna Mehler Paperny](#) Senior Producer, Investigative Data Desk Global News, November 4, 2015 3:11 pm



Maxime Faille was in court last week fighting the federal government.

He hopes Canada's new Justice Minister will make that a lot more rare.

[Jody Wilson-Raybould](#) — former Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief, Crown Prosecutor, treaty commissioner and newly elected MP for the new riding of Vancouver-Granville — is, as of Wednesday afternoon, Justice Minister and Attorney-General.





Symbolically, that's significant: An indigenous woman and vocal advocate for more collaborative relationships between indigenous peoples and government is now in charge of the file that determines, to a significant degree, the nature of the legal relationship between indigenous peoples and government.

"It's an incredibly exciting day. I feel very honoured and privileged to be given this portfolio," Wilson-Raybould said in a brief, chaotic scrum following the cabinet's first meeting.

"I'm immensely proud to be an aboriginal person in this country. And I'm equally proud to be a Canadian. And the diversity reflected around the cabinet table, in the House of Commons, is incredibly powerful."

Wilson-Raybould wouldn't say anything about how the government will approach a looming deadline to come up with a legislative solution on physician-assisted death, or how she will approach the Liberals' promise to legalize and regulate marijuana.

Her appointment is "a very strong and powerful statement," [Assembly of First Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde](#) said in an interview.

"Everybody thought that, as a First Nations individual, she should be appointed to Indigenous Affairs. I'm glad to see she wasn't. ...

"We have First Nations people who have skills and education and attributes in many different areas. We don't have to be pigeonholed into dealing with First Nations issues."

But this goes beyond symbolism: It could also mean a lot, materially, for Canada's relationship with its first peoples.

"It's an inspired choice," Faille said.

"Obviously she'll bring with her her intimate knowledge of these issues and how they play out on the ground.

“And I think she brings with her an understanding of the pent-up frustration there has been over the years with respect to these issues.”

[Faille, who heads Gowlings’ Aboriginal Law Group](#), spends a lot of time litigating First Nations issues.

“I can think of 20 or 30 of my files I’d like [Wilson-Raybould] to look at,” Faille joked.

Last week’s case takes issue with the legitimacy of the TransMountain pipeline environmental assessment, which Faille’s clients argue failed in its constitutional duty to consult aboriginal peoples affected.

“That is kind of a classic file of First Nations saying, ‘Hey, we want to be involved in the process. We want to be listened to and heard and engaged.’ And there hasn’t been sufficient willingness to do that.”

It’s an example of a file he hopes Wilson-Raybould will be able to influence.

She has spent years calling for [“a new fiscal relationship,”](#) a more productive, more collaborative relationships between government and aboriginal people, and for indigenous people to be included in decisions affecting them.

“I’d like to think that, based on the incoming government’s platform, that the position the government — that Canada — is taking is maybe in need of a refresher.”

He’d like to see “a move away from a very litigation-heavy approach and more toward an approach of discussion.”

But he realizes his sky-high hopes are hardly realistic.

“Expectations are obviously high. They’ll be very difficult, probably impossible to meet,” he said.

It’s important to note that while Prime Minister Justin Trudeau received kudos for his promise of a “nation-to-nation” relationship between Ottawa and aboriginal people, that concept isn’t new.

It’s been [cited](#) in [court rulings](#) for [decades](#).

It just hasn’t been put into practice consistently by Canada’s federal government.

“The courts have said time and again ‘Do this’ but clever lawyers always find a way to say, ‘This doesn’t apply here; it only applies there,’” Faille said.

“Using that [nation-to-nation] terminology is significant: It’s a sign of respect. It’s a sign of an understanding that these are not agreements to be imposed — these are agreements to be negotiated.”

Wilson-Raybould repeated that “nation-to-nation” commitment in an interview with Global News Wednesday evening.

“Our government is committed to ensuring we’re open, honest and transparent and ensuring we sit down on a nation-to-nation basis with aboriginal peoples and build a relationship, and there’s a partner in Ottawa.”

Bellegarde has a long list of laws “that impact in a negative way on inherent rights and treaty rights” that he hopes Wilson-Raybould will review. Bills [C-51](#), [C-38](#), [C-45](#) and [C-27](#) are among them — not to mention a slew of omnibus bills.

“There’s a number of bills that really are bad legislation,” Bellegarde said.

“Doing a federal law review is one of the key things we’ll look for from her.”

There will be no shortage of cases like that on her plate as justice minister: Right now the feds are fighting First Nations over such resource projects as [Northern Gateway](#) and [Trans Mountain](#); there are protracted land-claims cases pending; and the justice minister will no doubt have a hand in crafting an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, as well as possibly investigating a raft of allegations of police abuse in Val d’Or and elsewhere.

There’s also the [Truth and Reconciliation recommendations](#) Trudeau’s pledged to implement, and the international Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

But the potential for change goes deeper than that.

As [Dianne Corbiere](#) notes, the new justice minister will have a historic chance to repair a relationship between aboriginal peoples and the legal system that for centuries has been mostly adversarial.

“Our legal profession has had a lot to do with the harms caused to indigenous peoples,” said Corbiere, benchler for the Law Society of Upper Canada and past president of the Indigenous Bar Association.

“Now we have an opportunity. ... I think there are a lot of people that want to work with her, and are looking forward to it.”

Last year, Wilson-Raybould was among many people applauding the [Supreme Court’s recognition of Tsilhqot’in Nation’s land claim](#).

Now Bellegarde wants that “[game -changer](#)” decision to factor into federal policy-making. A review of comprehensive claims, for example, and an update to Canada’s right-to-self-governance policy.

“We win these court decisions but nothing changes,” he said.

“There has to be a forum where these Supreme Court decisions are given life.”

It’s been a “wonderful” day, Corbiere said.

“Everyone’s always a cynic, but I’m hopeful,” she said.

“It’s exciting times.”

**Direct Link:** <http://globalnews.ca/news/2318423/how-justice-minister-wilson-raybould-could-change-canada-aboriginal-relationship-no-pressure/>

## **Federal Aboriginal Affairs department renamed Indigenous and Northern Affairs**

[National News](#) | November 4, 2015 by [APTN National News](#)



**(Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett.)**

### **APTN National News**

**OTTAWA**—The federal Aboriginal Affairs department has been renamed Indigenous and Northern Affairs, it emerged Wednesday.

The name change was revealed when the list of Justin Trudeau’s cabinet was finally released Wednesday morning as the swearing-in ceremony at Rideau Hall commenced.

Carolyn Bennett, a medical doctor, was named to lead the re-christened Indigenous and Northern Affairs department.

The former critic for Aboriginal affairs while the Liberals were in opposition, as minister, Bennett takes over a portfolio that was at the centre of the deteriorating relationship between Ottawa and First Nations under the previous Stephen Harper government.

The Harper government changed the department's name from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in 2011.

Now, it appears, department officials will need to again order new letterhead.

**Direct Link:** <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/11/04/federal-aboriginal-affairs-department-renamed-indigenous-and-northern-affairs/>

## **This Is a Moment in Canadian Politics Indigenous People Have Been Waiting For**

By [Tamara Khandaker](#)

November 5, 2015 | 9:00 am

It was a day of emotional ups and downs for Michèle Audette.

At a Montreal press conference on Wednesday, she listened with a sinking feeling as politicians unveiled how they'd be responding to a scandal involving police officers in a small Quebec town, and allegations they had chronically abused indigenous women. It's the latest troubling story that has exposed the deep feelings of neglect Aboriginal people have in Canada, which is still confronting the disturbing legacy of mistreatment that sought, decades ago, to take the 'Indian out of the child,' along with an ongoing crisis of missing and murdered indigenous women.

And so, the promise of money to help address underlying societal issues specific to Aboriginal communities in Quebec was met with skepticism from Audette, a former president of the Native Women's Association of Canada.

But a computer screen in the vicinity offered her a glimmer of hope.

Justin Trudeau, Canada's new prime minister, was unveiling his cabinet and Carolyn Bennett, a woman she had come to respect, had been named the new minister of indigenous affairs.

Then, moments later, Audette and her colleagues found out the country's new justice minister was Jodi Wilson-Raybould, the first Aboriginal person to hold the key and high profile portfolio.

Jubilation swept over the group. Audette retreated to an alley, where she quietly wept with joy.

"For the first time in Canadian history, a prime minister is giving such a huge responsibility — it's no small responsibility — to an indigenous woman," said Audette, who was a Liberal candidate in the Quebec riding of Terrebonne and lost. "We now have an important portfolio."

Indeed, the moment was heralded as a watershed moment in relations between the federal government and Canada's first peoples following several fraught years under the previous Conservative government.

"I'm immensely proud to be an Aboriginal person in this country and I'm equally proud to be a Canadian," Wilson-Raybould said on Wednesday after her swearing in.

In addition to Wilson-Raybould, Trudeau tapped Nunavut MP Hunter TooToo to be minister of fisheries, oceans, and the Canadian coast guard. All told, 10 indigenous MPs, including eight Liberals, were elected to parliament in the October 19 election — a new record.

The surge comes after months of work by activists who were determined to bring First Nations communities, which traditionally do not vote in federal elections, to the polls by pushing key issues, such as an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, onto the electoral agenda.

Some communities saw voter turnout so high that they ran out of ballots. In certain ridings, the turnout increased by as much as 270 percent.

Trudeau has pledged a "renewed, nation-to-nation relationship" with indigenous people, and throughout the campaign made a number of commitments, including launching an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, investing \$2.6-billion for First Nations education, and ending rampant boil water advisories on reserves within five years.

Dawn Harvard, president of the Native Women's Association of Canada, said the cabinet appointments signaled a new era, which is "beginning with hope."

"The Trudeau government plans to walk the talk," she said. "This is the first time I've ever seen the government truly reflect Canadian society."

Vancouver-Granville MP Wilson-Raybould is a member of the We Way Kai Nation, a former regional chief of the BC Assembly of First Nations, and Crown prosecutor.

She has said it was a lack of cooperation from former prime minister Stephen Harper during the Idle No More protests in 2013 that pushed her to run for the Liberals in this election.

Wilson-Raybould's appointment is also significant for reasons beyond symbolism, said Harvard, citing the overrepresentation of indigenous people in prisons and a history of negative interactions between indigenous women and the justice system.

"It's because of racism and sexism, and because our people are living ... in third-world conditions and end up being pushed into vulnerable situations," she said. "The top person in that ministry being an indigenous person means those unconscious attitudes and assumptions that have prevailed for so long won't be running the show."

As minister of oceans, fisheries, oceans, and the Canadian coast guard, Hunter Tootoo, a rookie MP who served in Nunavut's legislative assembly from 1999 to 2013, has also inherited a complicated file. He'll be expected to deliver on a number of promises, including restoring funding to the federal ocean science and monitoring programs and freshwater research.

In the lead up to the cabinet unveiling, there was speculation that Trudeau would make another kind of history — by appointing the first indigenous leader at the helm of the department of aboriginal affairs. Instead, he went with Carolyn Bennett, a long-time Liberal MP for a Toronto riding, who is not indigenous but has a history of working with First Nations communities. She is also a former family doctor and professor of medicine at the University of Toronto.

Advocates say her appointment, to a new title of indigenous and northern affairs, brings hope for an improved relationship between the government and First Nations that Trudeau has promised.

National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Perry Bellegarde touted her "deep experience" and said she was an "effective and informed critic" in the previous parliament.

Harvard said Bennett has been standing with First Nations communities since long before the campaign, and that "she understands the situation, specifically with regard to missing and murdered indigenous women."

"She has been at the church meetings, at the screenings, at the fundraisers, the community meetings, so she is someone who isn't afraid to walk the talk, to stand with us, and speak up and do the right thing," said Harvard. "She has the understanding, the heart, and the commitment to do a good job."

Bennett will be responsible for fulfilling the Liberals' promises on First Nations issues — and upon her swearing in called herself the "minister of reconciliation."

While the numbers are record-breaking, indigenous MPs will still make up only 10 of 338 seats in the House of Commons. They represent around 4 percent of the population.

Still, the appointments indicate a change in attitude, said Harvard.



"The diversity that is reflected around the cabinet table, in the House of Commons is incredibly empowering," said Wilson-Raybould, the justice minister. "[It] brings voices – new voices to the table for substantive discussions and debate and dialogue and different perspectives from backgrounds, but ultimately working together to move forward in terms of solutions."

**Direct Link:** <https://news.vice.com/article/this-is-a-moment-in-canadian-politics-indigenous-people-have-been-waiting-for>

## **First Nations leaders in Quebec pleased with new Minister of Justice**



CTV Montreal

Published Thursday, November 5, 2015 11:16AM EST

Last Updated Thursday, November 5, 2015 12:06PM EST

Aboriginal leaders in Quebec are very happy to see that Canada's new Minister of Justice is an aboriginal woman.

Jody Wilson-Raybould was a Crown prosecutor and regional chief of the B.C. Assembly of First Nations before being appointed Justice Minister on Wednesday.

Her father is Bill Wilson, an aboriginal leader who successfully lobbied Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau to include amendments concerning the First Nations when Canada patriated the Constitution.



Jody Wilson-Raybould is sworn in as Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada during a ceremony at Rideau Hall, in Ottawa, on Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2015. (THE CANADIAN PRESS/Sean Kilpatrick)

Council chiefs in Kahnawake said that after years of acrimonious disputes with Ottawa, they hope their relationship with the federal government will improve.

Grand Chief Joe Norton said the Conservative government's approach seemed to be "making us very irrelevant, I use that term quite often. and that's quite disturbing."

Chief Gina Deer is more optimistic.

"I'm just thrilled to see someone with her knowledge and her history being appointed," said Deer.

She believes this could be the start of a new era of respect.

"It's hard to understand a people when you're not given all the information on who they are, and we are a nation. We are a people and we are different from the rest of the Canadian population."

One key desire is an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Previous prime minister Stephen Harper refused to hold an inquiry, saying that most of the crimes had been solved.

An RCMP review of cases between 1980 and 2012 identified 1,017 aboriginal women who had been killed, while 164 had disappeared. 70 percent of those slain were killed by indigenous men.

The RCMP said its solve rate for those crimes was 90 percent.

Nakuset, the director of the Native Women's Shelter, said she expected Wilson-Raybould would hold an inquiry.

"People have been asking for an inquiry for years and as an aboriginal woman I'm sure she knows someone who's gone missing and she'll want to work even harder," she said.

Norton said he has heard promises of change in the past and often been disappointed when it failed to materialize.

"There's always that difficulty of which master do you serve? First Nations or the Canadian public at large," said Norton.

**Direct Link:** <http://montreal.ctvnews.ca/first-nations-leaders-in-quebec-pleased-with-new-minister-of-justice-1.2644262>

## **New justice minister brings unique perspective to First Nations issues**

By Keith Baldrey Global News, November 4, 2015 7:27 pm



There are so many ways to view the make-up of the first cabinet of the new Trudeau era—among other things, it goes a long way to reflect the diversity of this country — but one aspect of it stands out above all others.

That would be the appointment of a prominent First Nations member as the Minister of Justice.

Such a thing would have been presumed preposterous just a few decades ago. Further back in the past, it would have even been deemed illegal.

So the elevation of Jody Wilson-Raybould, a Vancouver lawyer and Crown prosecutor, to that post is of truly historic proportions.

While the appointment of any First Nations member to a national cabinet is important, putting someone of that heritage in the justice portfolio itself is particularly powerful and overdue.

The justice system — which includes various police forces — has had a troubled relationship with First Nations communities for many, many years. Aboriginals have been plagued with disproportionately high interactions with the system and in parts of Canada have been mistreated by those tasked with the job of operating the system.

Presumably, Wilson-Raybould will try to mend those fences. At the very least, her appointment to this important post sends a signal the status quo will not be tolerated.



She will also bring a unique and important perspective to the constantly evolving relationship between the Crown and First Nations on critical issues such as land rights, treaties and land claims.

In many ways, her appointment reflects the new Prime Minister's determination to bring change on all kinds of fronts. It's not just about having gender parity reflected in the cabinet make-up, but also ensuring ethnic communities are well represented and so too are Canada's vast geographic regions.

Where his predecessor's government evolved, over time, into a seemingly soulless operation interested only in governing for a relatively small part of the population, Justin Trudeau is starting off his term at the helm by trying to show he's interested in governing on behalf of pretty well everyone.

His cabinet structure reflects this broad view in a number of ways. Aside from gender parity and significant representation of the country's ethnic diversity is the fact that, for the first time, the problem of climate change is an official part of the Environment Ministry's formal title (another is the establishment of a stand-alone science ministry).

Inclusive, diverse, fresh, youthful and enthusiastic: all of these terms can be applied to the new Prime Minister's kick-off to government, at least for now.

There will undoubtedly be missteps taken in the months ahead, as Trudeau has set the expectations bar very high by laying out an ambitious agenda. He may well fall flat on his face on meeting certain promises and carrying out initiatives.

But for now, it's a good start for the new government, and nothing says "change" more than putting a prominent First Nations member in charge of a justice system that has failed that community in so many ways throughout Canada's history.

**Direct Link:** <http://globalnews.ca/news/2319597/new-justice-minister-brings-unique-perspective-to-first-nations-issues/>

## **A distinguished prosecutor and First Nations leader, Canada's Justice Minister is something new**

[Brian Hutchinson](#) | November 4, 2015 | Last Updated: Nov 5 9:47 AM ET



THE CANADIAN PRESS/Adrian Wyld Governor General David Johnston and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau look on as Jody Wilson-Raybould is sworn in as the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada during ceremonies at Rideau Hall, Wednesday Nov. 4, 2015 in Ottawa.

VANCOUVER — Canada has never before had a justice minister like Jody Wilson-Raybould, 44, named to the position Wednesday by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Her appointment will seem to some like a miracle.

She is the first indigenous person chosen to serve as federal justice minister. She's also the first to have spent years working in Vancouver's notorious Downtown Eastside, as a Crown prosecutor. In that role, she dealt with the most violent in Canadian society, and the most vulnerable and troubled.

Canada's new justice minister has roots with an Indian reserve on Quadra Island, and lives in Vancouver with her husband, Tim Raybould, who is Caucasian. She is Kwakwaka'wakw, the traditional inhabitants of northern Vancouver Island, the adjacent mainland and local islands.

In her aboriginal communities, Wilson-Raybould is known also as Puglaas, the indigenous name given her as a child by her grandmother. In the Kwak'wala language, Puglaas means "a woman born to noble people."

Wilson-Raybould's mother, Sandra Wilson, was a teacher. Her father, Bill Wilson, was an outspoken First Nations leader, a firebrand who helped push aboriginal amendments into Canada's constitution. He successfully lobbied another prime minister, back in the early 1980s. That person was Pierre Trudeau, Justin's father.

The Wilsons expected all their children to succeed, off the reserve, and they certainly have. Jody is "the brightest Indian in the country, next to me," Bill Wilson boasted to the *Vancouver Sun*, when his second-eldest daughter was starting to make a name for herself in aboriginal issues and politics.

It was 2003, and Wilson-Raybould had just been recruited to the B.C. Treaty Commission (BCTC), the independent body of elected commissioners that oversees aboriginal treaty negotiations in the province.

Miles Richardson was then chief commissioner. He'd known Wilson-Raybould and her family for years, and was impressed by her decision to work as a prosecutor after graduating from the University of British Columbia law school. She toiled for three years inside a grungy provincial courthouse on Main Street, in the Downtown Eastside, worlds removed from the comfortable practice that many other young lawyers wanted.

Richardson was struck by her intellect and passion. She seemed to have inherited the latter from her father. "But Jody has always been very much her own person," Richardson said in an interview Wednesday. "She has a deep sense of her own values, and she has the courage to live them. I wanted the best talent I could get, so I approached Jody and told her that we needed her."

She joined the BCTC as an advisor. A year later, Richardson left to run as a Liberal candidate in the 2004 federal election. He lost. Wilson-Raybould, meanwhile, ran successfully for elected office, as a BCTC commissioner. She served for six years, working on more than a dozen treaty negotiations with B.C. First Nations and provincial and federal governments.

In 2009, Wilson-Raybould waded deeper into electoral politics, running for the B.C. Regional Chief position with the Assembly of First Nations. She won easily, and was re-elected three years later. The federal Liberals then identified her as a potential candidate, and she agreed to run for the party in the new riding of Vancouver Granville, which includes some of the city's most affluent neighbourhoods.

It wasn't an obvious place for Wilson-Raybould, who didn't live in the riding until recently. But she demolished the competition last month, winning the riding hands down.

Now she is federal justice minister, a huge leap forward. Among other things, Wilson-Raybould will push for aboriginal justice reform. She will also play a key role in the formation of a national public inquiry into missing and murdered women and girls, including its terms of reference. No easy task. But she would not have accepted her cabinet position without having Trudeau's campaign promise reiterated and affirmed.

Any reports coming from such an inquiry will be formally presented to her, as justice minister. Wilson-Raybould will be counted on to ensure that recommendations are considered and implemented, not ignored. Again, not that simple. But this minister of justice was born and raised for the job.

**Direct Link:** <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/distinguished-crown-prosecutor-and-first-nations-leader-canada-has-never-before-seen-a-justice-minister-like-jody-wilson-raybould>

## Aboriginal Sports

### Canadian sports fan files complaint over fake First Nations headdresses

Vancouver, BC, Canada / News Talk 980 CKNW | Vancouver's News. Vancouver's Talk [Emily Lazatin](#)

November 01, 2015 11:48 pm



It may be few and far between, but once in a while on TV, you might see a fan wearing a headdress in support of a sports team.

One fan lodged a complaint with a Canadian team.

Last season a Winnipeg jets fan complained when Chicago Blackhawks supporters were seen sporting fake headdresses when the team played at the MTS Centre.

Moving into a new season it poses the question: when you're supporting a team, is it offensive?

Dallas Hunt, a UBC student who specializes in Indigenous studies thinks so.



“They are normally usually bestowed among leaders in the community that serve a particular function and have been honored through brave acts or instances of incredible leadership. They are ceremonial or sacred in that respect”.

Hunt thinks it’s questionable when people wear headdresses to sporting events, especially when it’s a costume with a spiritual and ceremonial symbol.

“It’s offensive to a lot of Indigenous communities especially when they’re costumes. The headdress is a ceremonial and spiritual symbol. It’s not just an object that can be taken into any context”.

Hunt says Indigenous Headdresses are sacred, usually used for ceremonial purposes or given as a gift.

“It would be questionable that you would be wearing this sacred object in an event like a hockey arena, say”.

He says headdresses should never be taken out of context because they always serve a particular function among Indigenous people.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cknw.com/2015/11/01/canadian-sports-fan-files-complaint/>

## **'Life-changing' experience at the World Indigenous Games, says Chief Cook-Searson**

**The first ever Indigenous Games brought together indigenous competitors from around the world**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 02, 2015 1:40 PM CT Last Updated: Nov 02, 2015 1:40 PM CT



Chief Tammy Cook-Searson of Lac La Ronge Indian Band, says her experience at the first ever World Indigenous Games was "life-changing".

The games, which just wrapped up in Brazil, included competitions such as tug of war, archery, and canoe races. The 100-metre race had competitors running barefoot in the sand. Cook-Searson said they also worked to make the games environmentally friendly.

"They made ten canoes for the races. Every tree that they cut down, they planted 20."

'I've always been proud to be First Nations, but even prouder now after going to the games.' - *Chief Tammy Cook-Searson*

Some of the sporting events were less competitive. Saskatchewan put a men's team together for soccer, which included some dancers and singers from the Saskatchewan group, and a man from Ethiopia.

The most important part to Cook-Searson was meeting indigenous people from around the world.

"I've always been proud to be First Nations, but even prouder now after going to the games," she said. "It just renews and rejuvenates ourselves as indigenous peoples of the world."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/tammy-cooksearson-indigenous-games-1.3300248>

## **World Indigenous Games gold medal celebrated at Siksika victory rally**

**Rilee ManyBears ran his way to gold in 8-kilometre event at first international competition**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 04, 2015 7:11 PM MT Last Updated: Nov 04, 2015 7:41 PM MT



Rilee ManyBears was all smiles Wednesday as members of Siksika First Nation gave him a warm welcome for taking a gold medal at the recent World Indigenous Games in Brazil.



Rilee ManyBears took gold in the eight-kilometre race at the first-ever World Indigenous Games in Brazil last month. (Stacey Barton/CBC)

"I think it's a symbol that goals can be achieved through determination," ManyBears said. "If you set your goals high — no matter how high — you can still achieve them."

A victory rally with children and elders from the community southeast of Calgary honoured the young man.

ManyBears brought home a gold medal in the eight-kilometre running competition at the first-ever event held in Brazil last month.

He says it was about more than just competing.

"It was very powerful walking into the opening ceremonies seeing different indigenous cultures from all over the world — seeing their ceremonies, their way of life," he said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/siksika-man-takes-gold-world-indigenous-games-1.3304873>

# Energy, the Environment & Natural Resources

## World's 'AC' breaking down: Sudbury lecture

Thursday, October 29, 2015 2:25:43 EDT PM



Kevin Nimmock, For The Sudbury Star

Minutes before Nobel Peace Prize nominee Sheila Watt-Cloutier began her speech, staff members from Laurentian University were still packing more chairs into a big room on campus.

Watt-Cloutier's presentation was one of the main attractions of Laurentian's Indigenous Education Week. Students, professors and Sudbury residents congregated on Oct. 28 to learn about how climate change and pollution are affecting Inuit people in Canada's north.

"People in the south tend to see the Arctic as too cold, too dark or that there are too many problems", Watt-Cloutier said. "In reality, there is another richness that lies up in the Arctic and that is the people and the culture."

Watt-Cloutier said she travels across the country to speak about Inuit people because she wants to show that their problems are Canada's, and the rest of the world's, problems.

"It is about learning from one another," Watt-Cloutier said. "To make a difference, you just have to be a person who sees the value of the north in terms of maintaining the ice

and cold, and what it represents for the people that live there. By doing that, you are also maintaining the well-being of everywhere else."

"The Arctic's ice "i is melting, and the Arctic is the cooling system for the planet. The air conditioner is breaking down, and we have to be aware of that."

A former international chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, Watt-Cloutier is recognized internationally for both her environmental and Indigenous advocacy. This year, she published *The Right to be Cold*, a memoir that looks at what climate change means for the north on an economic and cultural level.

"When we are out on the land to teach our children to hunt, and to be out there providing for their community, it is not just about the technical harvesting of the animal, though that is important," Watt-Cloutier said. "It is about the holistic way in which we teach our children around ice and snow."

"It is about learning life skills and personal skills "i you are being taught patience by nature, you are learning how to be calm and you are learning how to not be impulsive. When the ice is gone, the people and culture will be gone."

Reflecting on the event, Watt-Cloutier said she was impressed by the audience, who asked several questions about how they could get involved.

"It went very well," she said. "I found that the audience fed me as much as I fed them, so it was a two-way street."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thesudburystar.com/2015/10/29/worlds-ac-breaking-down-sudbury-lecture>

## **New Aboriginal Minister 'Encouraging' Choice for Fisheries, Advocate Says**

Salmon defenders hope MP Hunter Tootoo inspires a 'seismic shift' in attitudes.

By [Jeremy J. Nuttall](#), Today, TheTyee.ca



Nunavut MP Hunter Tootoo now leads the Ministry of Oceans, Fisheries, and Canadian Coast Guard.

The appointment of an Indigenous person to oversee Canada's fisheries and oceans could signify a new era for aboriginal fishing rights in British Columbia, says a salmon advocate.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's new cabinet sworn in Wednesday includes Nunavut MP Hunter Tootoo, who was handed the Ministry of Oceans, Fisheries, and Canadian Coast Guard.

Tootoo logged 14 years experience as an MLA in the territory's legislature, up until 2013. During that time, he served in cabinet in a variety of positions, including minister of education.

The appointment of an Indigenous person as the minister responsible for Canadian fisheries is "interesting and encouraging" from a British Columbia perspective, and also for salmon, said one fisheries expert.

Aaron Hill of the Watershed Watch Salmon Society said the appointment could mean a "seismic shift" in Ottawa's approach to First Nations fisheries.

"We've had a slew of court decision over the past few years continually affirming aboriginal rights and titles," Hill said. "It will be very interesting now that we have an aboriginal minister while this is happening."

One of the larger [decisions](#) came out of the Supreme Court of Canada in 2014 and upheld the rights of five bands in B.C. to sell their catch.

Hill said such decisions have made aboriginal fisheries issues more important in the province, and may affect how commercial salmon fisheries are managed.

"First Nations rights-based fisheries are central to that process," he said. "There's a general revitalization of aboriginal fisheries that were outlawed a hundred years ago and are slowly coming back."

Hill also cited the Liberal party's promise to adopt recommendations in the Cohen Commission, an inquiry into the decline of sockeye salmon in the Fraser River, as good news for B.C. fisheries.

Newly elected Liberal MP Pam Goldsmith-Jones recently [said](#) she heard a lot of concerns about wild salmon and other environmental issues while campaigning in her riding of West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country.

### **'Dawn of a new day': Grand Chief**

Despite the importance of natural resources, environmental issues and fisheries in B.C., no ministers from the province were handed the relevant portfolios. But that isn't a great concern, according to the president of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs.

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip said while he is happy with the shift on the fisheries file, overall the Trudeau cabinet looks to offer a far better working relationship with aboriginal people than the previous Conservative government.

Phillip said the appointment of Jody Wilson-Raybould, an aboriginal woman, to the position of attorney general is another cause for "optimism" and said he likes the mix of cabinet.

"I can see all of them working very closely together," he said. "I think all of these appointments have a certain synergy, and lead us away from a very adversarial, hostile approach to issues."

While the Liberals' tone and attitude towards First Nations issues is different, Phillip said he doesn't believe it will stop there and that the party sincerely wants to work on long-existing concerns in Canada's aboriginal communities.

For First Nations in British Columbia, that will make a big difference, he said.

"We survived the long, dark night of the Harper government and we're coming into the dawn of a new day with the Trudeau government," he said. "It presents a lot of opportunity." 🍷

**Direct Link:** <http://thetyee.ca/News/2015/11/05/Aboriginal-Fisheries-Minister/>

## **Land Claims & Treaty Rights**

### **Consultation not required with NG on \$30 million investment: Minister**





Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs Minister Keith Russell

The money — which included \$11 million for a new wellness centre in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, plus other projects — was provided through amendments made by the Provincial Government to the Voisey's Bay Development Agreement.

The remainder of the \$30 million will be invested in supportive housing and health supports for vulnerable populations across the province (\$12 million); a new pool for Placentia (\$4.5 million); and funding for a cardiovascular hybrid operating room at the Health Sciences Centre (\$2.5 million).

In a press release issued yesterday afternoon, Nunatsiavut Government (NG) president Sarah Leo expressed disappointment that none of the \$30 million community development funding provided to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador from Vale will be directly spent in Nunatsiavut; that there was no consultation with NG on the projects chosen; and alleged the amendment, is one of several that is in direct violation of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement.

"The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is well aware of our concerns with respect to the amendment to the Voisey's Bay Development Agreement," says the President. "Allocating this \$30 million without first consulting with the Nunatsiavut Government further adds to our concerns."

Russell said the Community Investment Fund was announced as part of the amendment, and merely allowed the mine to continue its existing operations.

"As it dealt solely with Long Harbour, consultation was not required," said Russell in an emailed statement to The Labradorian today.

"We are confident in our interpretation of our obligations under the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement. The consultation obligations in the Voisey's Bay chapter of the LILCA relate to the impact of mining operations in the Voisey's Bay area."

In choosing which projects received funding, Russell said the government reviewed the needs of all communities in the province and a great deal of consideration was given to prioritize these projects.

“These projects will benefit all members of their communities and surrounding areas,” he said.

“The announcement also included \$12 million for supportive housing and health supports for vulnerable populations across the province. The program will include a yearly call for funding proposals from community stakeholders including Nunatsiavut. The program will commence in 2017.”

In addition, he added, the province announced its 10-year homelessness plan yesterday, which included the development of two more supportive housing units by NLHC in partnership with the Nunatsiavut Government, one each for Nain and Hopedale.

“While these are separate initiatives, the \$12M announced yesterday as part of the Community Investment Fund will be spent according to priorities/solutions identified by the 10-year Homelessness Plan.”

Russell said it’s also important to note the amendment to the Voisey’s Bay Development agreement is a “positive step for all.”

“It ensures continued operations at the mine and keeps Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement beneficiaries employed,” he said. “Continued operation of the mine also ensures that the Impact and Benefits Agreement existing between the Nunatsiavut Government and Vale provides ongoing benefits.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thelabradorian.ca/news/regional/2015/10/30/consultation-not-required-with-ng-on--30-million-investment--min.html>

## **Inuit-owned land along Iqaluit's Federal Road opens to development**

**The land could create 'continued construction possibilities' for the next 10 years says developer**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 01, 2015 6:00 AM CT Last Updated: Nov 01, 2015 6:00 AM CT



Inuit-owned land along Federal Road in Iqaluit may soon be developed. (Google)

A large area of land in Nunavut's capital could soon have residential housing units, office buildings and even a conference centre.

Iqaluit's outgoing city council amended its General Plan bylaw last week, allowing for the development of Inuit-owned land along Federal Road.

"It's conceivable that that parcel of land would allow for continued construction possibilities for the next 10 to 12 years," says Sheldon Nimchuk, project manager of Qikiqtaaluk Corporation, an Inuit-owned development corporation.

He says now that the city has given the green light, construction plans can get underway.

"We are working on our own hotel and conference centre and we are working ourselves into a position to be on schedule to commence construction next sealift season."

Nimchuk says he's aware, however, that approval from city council is just a first step.

Mélodie Simard, Iqaluit's director of planning and development, says the land use plan for Federal Road includes an area where the Qikiqtani Inuit Association would like to develop a conference centre.

That's just the beginning of the plans.

A 35-page development outline includes more than 150 residential units, mixed commercial buildings and new emergency services centre.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/inuit-owned-land-along-igaluit-s-federal-road-opens-to-development-1.3298702>

## **Wild rice fight: cottagers versus Indians**

A staple of First Nations diet is taking over valuable shoreline in the Kawarthas, say cottagers on Pigeon Lake, but those who weekend in the area may be the real invasive species in this tale

by [Drew Hayden Taylor](#)

November 1, 2015, 8:09 AM

A little more than 40 kilometres north of Peterborough on the shores of Pigeon Lake, a tempest has been fermenting for months between cottagers in the area and natives from the local reserve.

It's a battle of aesthetics versus culture, native subsistence over property rights, Muskoka chairs over Indigenous pilaf. At its heart is a fundamentally different view of what is important on a cultural level.

The villain in this tale, if there is a villain, is James Whetung of the Curve Lake First Nation who, for the past several years has been accused of seeding the shoreline up and down the lake with wild rice. And then harvesting the crop along with the help of native folks from a number of nearby Aboriginal communities.

Why? Why do Italians grow grapes and the French make cheese? Maybe it's genetically-programmed. Wild rice, or manomin in Ojibway, is actually a grain that has since time immemorial been a staple of First Nations diets. Most indigenous gatherings would not be complete without one to three wild rice casseroles at the centre of the potluck table.

But a federation of cottagers located on this Kawarthas lake feel the presence of this plant somehow infringes upon their right to enjoy the beauty of the Canadian wilderness – and use of their Seadoos. Valuable shorelines are being assaulted by the plant's tall stocks rising above the water's edge, they say, giving it the appearance of a marsh. Evidently marshes and swamps are a bad thing to those who weekend in the area.

It is also alleged the vegetation could be considered a water hazard, limiting accessibility of their boats.

Fond of shallow clear water found near the shore, it's been theorized that the proliferation of the rice beds is not just Whetung's doing. Wild rice kernels can lie dormant for long periods of time until conditions are ripe for growth, the kind of conditions, for example, that can be encouraged by an invasive species like zebra mussels, which were introduced into these waterways many moons ago. The mussels help filter the water and improve conditions for this indigenous plant to grow.

Things came to a head in late summer when cottagers persuaded the Trent Severn waterway to dredge the offending plants. But that attempt by cottagers to take matters into their own hands was short-lived. That's because Trent Severn authorities are

obligated to consult local First Nations regarding such activity. It seems the cottagers own the land but not the water.

The dredging has been stopped and both communities are discussing how to deal with the matter. All this difficulty over a small section of a lake that spans some 57 square kilometres.

In my early teens, I remember witnessing these dredging machines cross back and forth across Chemong Lake and Buckhorn Lake, scooping up huge piles of something called Eurasian water-milfoil. Introduced to Canada sometime in the late 19th-century, this invasive species has been choking waterways, killing biodiversity and aquatic species in southern and central Ontario and, since the late 60s. The dredging was not particularly successful. Milfoil only made for quasi-adequate garden fill, making the area smell fishy.

Oddly enough, the Ministry of Natural Resources encourages the cultivation of wild rice since it helps cleanse the water. Fish and aquatic animal populations love it, and of course it's an excellent and nutritious food source.

Understandably, this issue has become a cause of concern for Indigenous activists. Calling the actions of the non-natives a form of "cottage colonization," Susan Blight, a Toronto Anishnawbe activist and artist, told the Globe and Mail that "There's a philosophical difference about recreational enjoyment of the lake and the lake as a spiritual being."

Part of the disagreement is over the wording in the treaty governing the area. Whetung, who has a provincial license giving him the right to plant and harvest the wild rice, is allowed to gather it to provide for himself, his family, and community. But Whetung also sells the wild rice online and at a farmer's market to non-natives, which some argue violates the treaty.

This year Whetung was proud to announce that he managed to rise just above the poverty line. Evidently, for native businessmen, there is no real fortune in wild rice. It seems certain he will not be using his profits to buy a cottage.

Many Pigeon Lake residents, meanwhile, resent the fact the disagreement has devolved into a bigger issue of native versus cottagers' rights. They say it's strictly a matter of boat safety and property values and I believe them. To tell you the truth, some of my best friends are cottagers. They're an interesting breed with fascinating ways and have been maligned for far too long.

Decades ago in my youth, people from my community used to spend the day out on the lake, enjoying the sun, the water and the landscape. When we got hungry, we would pull over to a nearby shore and have lunch, maybe a fish fry, and soak up the essence of what the Kawarthas offered. Alas, those days are long gone. Every bit of shoreline now has a cottage on it. Talk about an invasive species.

*Drew Hayden Taylor is an award-winning playwright, author and humorist. He is originally from the Curve Lake First Nation in central Ontario.*

**Direct Link:** <https://nowtoronto.com/news/wild-rice-fight-cottagers-versus-indians/>

## Opinion: Time for change for B.C.'s First Nations

By Shane Gottfriedson, Special to The Sun November 3, 2015



First Nations culture has a deep-rooted connection to the land. For generations, we have hunted and fished for food. We collected berries for medicine. And our spiritual history has fit hand in glove with the land and the water.

First Nations culture has a deep-rooted connection to the land. For generations, we have hunted and fished for food. We collected berries for medicine. And our spiritual history has fit hand in glove with the land and the water.

Today, that relationship has changed. It's had to.

Let there be no doubt that our culture remains deeply connected to the natural environment. We will always honour this part of our past, and it will forever be a part of our daily lives.

But the reality is that, across B.C., we are now modern-day Indians — adapting to changes in the world around us and adjusting our cultural and business practices accordingly. That means today, we are facing challenges of balancing the protection of our land and culture with the very real need for economic development.

When I ran to become Regional Chief of the B.C. Assembly of First Nations, I did it for one main reason. I ran because I believe that First Nations people must improve the quality of life for all our people across this province.

I believe this means we must be innovative and dynamic in how we approach economic development.

Because yes, we are environmentalists, but we are also business people.

So it can't just be beads and blankets anymore. It's time we get our fair share.

I believe industry and government know that, and that they want to meet that new standard.

But what does that mean? How do we create financial security for ourselves through economic development — and more specifically through resource development — while also maintaining our connection to the land and to our traditions and cultures?

I believe it means taking control of the process, and being clear about what is important to us, to our people and to our land.

There are many examples of this happening all across this province, but one that I think demonstrates the kind of new approach we must embrace is taking place on the Squamish First Nation.

Recently, the Squamish Nation Council voted to issue an environmental assessment certificate to Woodfibre LNG — a company planning to build a small-scale LNG export facility on Squamish traditional territory.

This vote came after months of intense study by the Squamish Nation, which conducted its own independent environmental assessment on the project.

The certificate also sets out 25 conditions on issues of environmental and cultural importance that the Squamish have said must be met as part of its approval.

In a news release, Squamish Chief and Council Spokesman Ian Campbell made clear the priorities that were important throughout the process.

“For our Nation, the environment comes first, but there is more, much more, to be done. During our community meetings, members made clear their priorities — environmental protection and public safety among others — and we intend to set these into law,” he said in a written statement.

“The assessment represents an exercise in Squamish Nation self-determination by moving beyond mere consultation and getting to First Nation consent,” he continued. “Our decision today reflects the interests, the will, and the beliefs of our members. It is our future — our decision to make.”

To me, this process is a true coming together of the values of our past and of the realities of today.



As First Nations, we have always believed that if we take care of the land, the land will take care of us.

In conducting its own environmental assessment, the Squamish Nation honoured this by putting the environment and its own culture at the forefront of a process that for too long has ignored these important factors.

I believe this is the kind of change we need to make across our province if we are to strike a meaningful balance between economic development and our connection to the land.

I have spoken to chiefs across this province and I know all agree on one thing: It's time for change. We're tired of managing poverty. Improving our quality of life has to be our primary goal.

Fortunately, progress is taking place. Our leaders are understanding that we can't just rely on government.

So there are still many gaps, but the clouds are parting and I can see the mountaintop we need to reach.

To get there we need to be intelligent, innovative and nimble in our negotiations.

We need to set the terms and we need to be in control.

We need to show industry and government what it looks like to balance our financial, cultural and environmental priorities.

I believe our people can wait no longer. The time is now.

*Chief Shane Gottfriedson is the Regional Chief for the B.C. Assembly of First Nations.*

Read more:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/business/Time+change+First+Nations/11490283/story.html#ixzz3qdtHSa16>

## **Special Topic: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women**

### **Justin Trudeau's promise: Inquiry on missing and murdered indigenous women**

**Experts say consultations with the Aboriginal community must start right away, but the inquiry itself shouldn't be rushed into.**



Women and men gathered in front of Toronto Police Service HQ for the 9th annual rally in remembrance of missing, and murdered, women on Feb. 14, 2014.

**By:** [Michael Woods](#) Metro Published on Thu Oct 29 2015

*Each day this week, Metro is taking an in-depth look at some of the immediate items on prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau's to-do list. For our final installment in this series, we examine his pledge to launch a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women.*

After years of pressure on the federal government to call an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, the newly elected federal Liberals have promised one.

Nearly 1,200 indigenous women were murdered or went missing between 1980 and 2012, according to an RCMP report released last year.

Supporters for a national inquiry on the matter include the provincial and territorial premiers, aboriginal groups and the United Nations.

The Liberal platform promises to “immediately launch” a national public inquiry, which would “seek recommendations on concrete actions that governments, law enforcement, and others can take to solve these crimes and prevent future ones.”

At his news conference the day after the election last week, Trudeau didn't provide a specific timeline for an inquiry but said he wanted to “get moving on this quickly.”

Dawn Harvard, president of the Native Women's Association of Canada, said consultations with the necessary people must start right away, but the inquiry itself shouldn't be rushed into.

“The initial process needs to start right away, but that initial process itself can take a significant amount of time just in order to make sure we get it right,” Harvard said.

Any successful inquiry requires initial consultations with aboriginal women and their families, the larger aboriginal leadership and other relevant groups, to establish the process and scope of the inquiry, she said. It's particularly important that the families of the victims have a leading role, she said.

"We're only going to get one shot at this, and we need to make sure that we have all the key voices being heard at the table to make sure we get as comprehensive a picture as possible."

That process should start as soon as cabinet is named Nov. 4, when establishing an inquiry will be a top priority for the new aboriginal affairs minister.

While in government, the Conservatives resisted calls for a national inquiry, saying there had already been more than 40 studies on the matter and action was needed.

There are also fears that an inquiry wouldn't necessarily lead to action. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples in the 1990s took five years, cost more than \$50 million, and the more than 440 recommendations it produced mostly went unheeded.

But Harvard said it shouldn't be an either/or conversation.

"Absolutely, we need action right now, we need to make sure we are addressing the crisis," she said. "But at the same time ... we need to have a much clearer understanding of the larger circumstances, of the systemic problems ... so we can make the necessary long-term changes and investments."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.metronews.ca/features/justin-trudeau-promises/2015/10/30/justin-trudeau-promises-an-inquiry-on-indigenous-women.html>

## **Acadia art project on missing and murdered aboriginal women vandalized**

**REDress project aims to raise awareness about on racial and gender violence**

By Natalie Dobbin, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 30, 2015 6:30 AM AT Last Updated: Oct 30, 2015 6:30 AM AT



The REDress project seeks to collect 600 red dresses by community donation and aims draw attention to violent crimes against aboriginal women and 'to evoke a presence through the marking of absence.' (Acadia University Art Gallery)

An art project representing missing and murdered aboriginal women at Acadia University in Nova Scotia has been vandalized, leaving the gallery curator in shock and wondering why it was destroyed.

Initially, around 10 red dresses hung from trees outside of the Wolfville university's Art Gallery in September, in what the artist who created it called a visual reminder of the staggering number of aboriginal women who are no longer with us.

Now there are just two.

"Within a few days of the exhibition being up, half of the dresses we put up were either damaged or they were completely stolen all together," said Laurie Dalton, the gallery curator and director.

Since then, all of the dresses have been stolen, or "damaged and kind of just discarded."

A community member did donate three new dresses, but only two are left of those.

## **More questions than answers**

"I think there's been more, I would say, questions than answers," Dalton said.

She's shocked and doesn't know if it was just someone late at night joking around or something else.



An empty hanger could be seen hanging outside the art gallery at Acadia University in Wolfville. (Jon Saklofske)

"Is it someone that is really, you know, motivated by what the exhibition represents?" she asked.

Winnipeg-based Métis artist Jamie Black is behind the REDress project, pronounced "red dress" and/or "redress."

"The project seeks to collect 600 red dresses by community donation that will later be installed in public spaces throughout Winnipeg and across Canada," according to Black's project website.

"Through the installation I hope to draw attention to the gendered and racialized nature of violent crimes against aboriginal women and to evoke a presence through the marking of absence."

## **Dresses woven into hangers**

There's an inside exhibition at Acadia University and an outdoor one outside the gallery. The outdoor portion has labels and signs on the trees explaining what the project is about.

"It's been quite difficult for us to kind of process what these dresses that already represent, you know, a disembodied lost woman have now themselves been taken," said Dalton.



Initially, around 10 red dresses hung from trees outside of Acadia University's Art Gallery in September. Most of them are now gone. (CBC)

Those dresses are woven into the hangers with fishing line, and the hangers are attached to the trees with fishing line, so they can't easily be taken off, Dalton said. The trees were even damaged in the process.

"The force really took me aback," said Dalton.

## **Acadia was the worst**

Dalton said Black came to Acadia University to give an artist talk recently and explained that when a public installation is involved, there's always the risk that something will happen to it.

"Some of it was expected, but when I asked Jamie she actually suggested to me that Acadia was the worst in terms of how quickly the damage happened," Dalton said.

One of Dalton's teaching assistants at the gallery wrote a piece about the vandalism in the student paper, but there hadn't been too much discussion outside of classes.

After Black's talk, talk took off — and one English professor, Jon Saklofske, wrote a piece on social media about what happened.

Dalton said her students also organized a student-led public discussion on what happened.



"We're hoping on Nov. 13 that we can have a discussion," she said. "What's leading to this? And why are people, why are people doing this?"

Dalton is also encouraging people to come to the gallery to see the show and the dresses and remnants of fishing line hanging in the trees.

The exhibition runs until Nov. 29.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/aboriginal-art-project-at-acadia-vandalized-1.3295563>

## Justin Trudeau's MMIW inquiry should be family-driven, organizers say

**Organizer of #ourinquiry campaign says families of MMIW 'live and breathe' the issue everyday**

By Tiar Wilson, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 31, 2015 6:00 AM ET Last Updated: Oct 31, 2015 11:32 AM ET



Family members of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in Manitoba gathered Oct. 29, 2015 to develop a vision statement on what they would like to see come out of a national inquiry. Bernadette Smith is in the front row, second from the left. (Facebook)

Loved ones of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls are calling on prime minister-designate Justin Trudeau to put families at the forefront of a national inquiry into the issue.

"We heard him say after the election, that he is going to speak with stakeholders, but there was no mention of families in there," said Bernadette Smith.

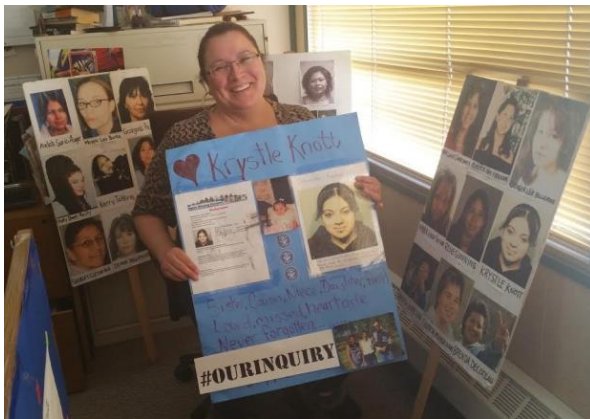


Smith is taking the lead in #ourinquiry, a campaign that's picking up on social media. Her sister Claudette Osborne has been missing from Winnipeg since July 24, 2008.

"The families have been living it. They know it. You know it is something they live and breathe everyday," Smith said.

Along with Nahanni Fontaine, Manitoba's special advisor on aboriginal women's issues, Smith brought together dozens of families in Manitoba, who are now reaching out to families across the country.

What do family members want from an inquiry?



Wendy Goulet, cousin of Krystle Knott says a family driven inquiry will help identify gaps in reporting women and girls who go missing. (submitted by Wendy Goulet)

Wendy Goulet's cousin [Krystle Knott](#), of Dawson Creek, B.C., went missing on Feb. 18, 2005.

What Goulet wants from an inquiry: "Hearing directly [about] what people are going through and then maybe we can see change. Identify the gaps and maybe some things are easy fixes. Or maybe not, but hear what they have gone through," Goulet said.

Knott's [skull was found buried in a shallow grave](#) near Grande Prairie, Alta., on May 21, 2011, next to Rene Gunning.

Gunning and Knott went missing from the West Edmonton Mall. Gunning got the attention of police and media but Knott didn't, even though her aunt told the RCMP she was missing.

"It was like Krystle didn't have a name or ... a life. It wasn't until she turned 19 in B.C. that they finally identified that she went missing in 2005 with Rene Gunning," she said.

As part of her own healing, Goulet helped start up the annual Sisters in Spirit walk in Peace River in 2010.

"Originally, we just read names of women," explained Goulet. It inspired her to start doing research about the women and girls.

"Some of them, I didn't even know they are missing, obviously their family knew ... but we didn't know, the community didn't," Goulet said.

## **Attack systemic racism**



Delilah Saunders is the sister of Loretta Saunders. She would like to see systemic change come from an inquiry. (submitted by Delilah Saunders)

Delilah Saunders sister [Loretta Saunders](#) was murdered in Halifax in 2014.

Delilah learned of her sister's death through a reporter.

"It never leaves my mind," Saunders said of the insensitivity her family has been exposed to.

"I think it's a symptom of the intricate and systemic negligence from society as a whole."

Saunders says an inquiry will force systemic change from the government, policing authorities and the media.

"I hope it addresses the racism that is deeply embedded in our society," she said.

"When Loretta went missing, the pressure on my family, the worry, and not knowing. Two weeks was too long for me, I can't imagine how I would cope with not knowing for months, years or decades."

She says because families are often the ones to take the lead on ground searches, it only makes sense to have to include them.

"I think it will give a lot of families courage to talk about it, too. I've met families who have loved ones who have been missing for 25, 30 years. It's not an isolated incident."

## **Appoint an indigenous commissioner**



Robert Pictou's sister Virginia Pictou went missing over 22 years ago. He would like to see an Indigenous commissioner lead the inquiry. (submitted by Robert Pictou)

Robert Pictou's sister Virginia Pictou went missing in Maine, in 1993.

For two decades Robert Pictou of Shubenacadie First Nation in Nova Scotia hid his own grief surrounding the disappearance of his sister Virginia from Maine in 1993.

"I could only bring my healing of my missing sister to a certain point and then from there I had to stop that healing process because I had to be stronger for others," Pictou said.

Pictou wants to see Trudeau appoint an indigenous commissioner to lead an inquiry.

"What I hope that he does is ... taps into the existing work that's being done out there already," he said.

Pictou now works in broadcasting in Terrace, B.C., for CBC affiliate CFTKTV as the producer and host of its weekly talk show Open Connection.

"I am fortunate enough where I have something that's called air time where I can bring things to the forefront with the murdered and missing women [issue] that is going on," he said, adding that goes for all families affected, including his own.

## Respect and dignity



Bernadette Smith's sister Claudette Osborne disappeared in 2008 and hasn't been seen since. (CBC)

Smith's sister [Claudette Osborne](#) has been missing from Winnipeg since July 24, 2008.

Smith said above all else, a family-driven inquiry will give these women and girls the respect and dignity they deserve.

"They are often portrayed as someone who doesn't have a job, or disposable. That no one cares about them, when in fact they have loved ones waiting for them," Smith said.

"[Claudette's] got a teenager now. [Her kids] know that their mother isn't there and we don't know where she is. We just try to keep her memory alive with them through telling stories about her and helping them know who she was as a person."

Smith said in the seven years since her sister went missing, there have been some small changes in how these cases are handled, but it's only because the families have fought long and hard for it.

"We were looking at the justice system, policing, having people — when they are doing the inquiry — visit the communities of these people who have gone missing or been murdered," Smith said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/justin-trudeau-mmiw-inquiry-should-be-family-driven-1.3297861>

# Families must be consulted before inquiry begins into missing indigenous women

**Prime Minister-designate Justin Trudeau has promised to call a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, but now faces pressure to get it done right.**



A portrait of Maisy, who went missing in 2008 at the age of 16, held by her mother Laurie Odjick in Maniwaki, Que.

**By:** [Joanna Smith](#) Ottawa Bureau reporter, Published on Sat Oct 31 2015

OTTAWA—Prime Minister-designate Justin Trudeau has promised to call a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women, but now that it is on the radar, there is some pressure to make sure it is done right.

“We’re only going to get one chance at this, obviously. It’s really important that we do this right,” said Dawn Lavell Harvard, president of the Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC).

The Liberals have committed \$40 million over two years to an inquiry that is expected to examine the root causes behind the more than 1,200 cases of missing or murdered indigenous women and girls.

The numbers are one thing, but those tasked with setting up a national inquiry will need to make difficult decisions about which stories to highlight, which families to hear from and which of the many systemic problems surrounding the issue to address.

Kim Stanton, legal director of the Toronto-based Women’s Legal Education and Action Fund, said the inquiry must be structured to attract the attention of Canadians throughout the entire process.

“A really good inquiry is a pedagogical exercise,” said Stanton, who wrote her doctoral dissertation on truth commissions and public inquiries and said getting a report at the end should not be the only goal.

“The point of an inquiry is to educate us about what is going on in our society that is wrong. It can do that, as it goes along, if it is well run and well organized and has various components that will enable the commissioners to more ably tackle the problem in a way that will engage the public, so that by the time they report, there is some political will to do something with the report.”

Everyone agrees the scope and mandate of the inquiry should not be set without first listening to the families of missing and murdered women.

“I think families should be a major part of that inquiry because we are the ones who are living through it and are still living through it,” said Laurie Odjick, whose daughter Maisy was 16 when she [went missing](#) from Maniwaki, Que., seven years ago with her friend Shannon Alexander, 17.

Odjick, who has always been on the fence about a national inquiry because she is skeptical of what it will achieve, also wants Trudeau to take charge of that crucial first step.

“He, himself, should meet with us and talk to us and ask us questions because that is something that was never done,” she suggested.

It remains to be seen whether Trudeau will take that step personally, as the new government is focused on preparing for the [transition to power](#) Wednesday, but Liberal MP Carolyn Bennett said there is an understanding that involving the families before launching an inquiry will be key to its success.

“Justin Trudeau believes you have to talk to the people with expertise and those with lived experience in order to get good policy or good processes,” said Bennett, who was the aboriginal affairs critic in the previous Parliament. “I think step number one is to be in touch with people who have been doing a substantial amount of work, but number one is the families.”

Whatever form the consultations take, many believe it should be done directly with families and aboriginal women at the grassroots level and not through [national organizations](#) such as the Assembly of First Nations.

“I know that many families have been hurt and there is a lot of trust issues with the (national organizations) with families. I think they need to stay out of it,” said Beverley Jacobs, a former president of NWAC, although she thinks the organizations and their expertise have other roles to play.



Tanya Kappo, an indigenous lawyer and activist, noted the grassroots have been playing a larger role in the conversation over the past few years, such as through the [Idle No More](#) movement with which she has been involved.

“They are perfectly capable of talking for themselves. I think they may have been quite clear, in that even though these organizations exist and may have some views, they don’t represent the voices of the people at the grassroots,” said Kappo.

Harvard, of the NWAC, said she understands those concerns.

“Even just for me, trying to ensure that we have consulted with and really come to a consensus of the opinions and the concerns of all of our women, from the East Coast right to (Vancouver’s) Downtown Eastside, that’s a huge challenge,” she said. “That’s why it is important for those grassroots organizations to have a voice, to have a space, to have support, to have standing.

“We don’t want to see our women being pushed out of the process and have it being taken over by political leaders who essentially came much later to the process.”

### **By the numbers**

**718,500:** Number of aboriginal females in Canada, representing 4.3 per cent of the population (Source: 2011 National Household Survey)

**1,017:** Number of aboriginal female victims of homicide across all police jurisdictions from 1980 to 2012, representing about 16 per cent of all female homicides (Source: Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: A National Operational Overview, RCMP, 2014)

**174:** Number of aboriginal females missing, representing 10 per cent of all missing-persons cases involving women and girls, since 1951 (Source: Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: 2015 Update to the National Operational Overview, RCMP)

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/10/31/families-must-be-consulted-before-inquiry-begins-into-missing-indigenous-women.html>

## **Catcheways allowed to continue search for daughter without warrant**

**Dakota Tipi chief says Jennifer Catcheway's parents can continue looking for daughter**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Nov 02, 2015 9:25 AM CT Last Updated: Nov 02, 2015 6:21 PM CT





The chief of the Dakota Tipi First Nation says the search for Jennifer Catcheway can continue on the southern Manitoba reserve without a search warrant.

The family searched the community's landfill last week after receiving a tip about Catcheway, who has been missing since 2008.

Chief David Pashe previously said the missing woman's parents would only be welcome to return with the RCMP.

Bernice and Wilfred Catcheway, Jennifer Catcheway's parents, will be allowed to continue looking for clues into their daughter's disappearance on Dakota Tipi land if they allow band councillors to accompany them, said Pashe. The councillors will ensure private property is respected and land is returned to its original state after the search, he said.

The change of heart comes after Heidi Cook, a Misipawistik Cree Nation (formerly Grand Rapids First Nation) band councillor, wrote an open letter on Sunday to Pashe after learning he told Catcheway's family they'd need a search warrant to come back to his community.



From Left to right, Douglas Gladue, Sheila North-Wilson, grand chief of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, Chief David Pashe, Grand Cheif Derek Nepinak, Karl Stone and Daniel Pashe. Together the group decided on a compromise Monday to allow the family of Jennifer Catcheway to continue to search Dakota Tipi land for the missing woman. (CBC)

"My concern is the Catcheway family is doing all the investigation themselves — they're not police officers. They're coming and interrogating the people themselves and that, for me, is not right," Pashe had told CBC.

The Catcheway family and several volunteers searched part of Dakota Tipi near Portage la Prairie on Friday, after getting a new tip about Jennifer, whom they last heard from in 2008. The previous day they searched the Dakota Tipi landfill for possible burial sites.



Jennifer Leigh Catcheway (Manitoba Integrated Task Force)

"I've always had questions about Dakota Tipi, unanswered questions from 2008," said Wilfred Catcheway, Jennifer's father. "We always end up coming back to Dakota Tipi."

Catcheway, who lived in Portage la Prairie with her family, spoke by phone with her parents on June 19, 2008, the day before her 18th birthday. She was supposed to return home the following day, but they haven't heard from her since.

RCMP have received tips that Catcheway was last seen at a party on Dakota Tipi, but RCMP say her last phone call was traced to Grand Rapids, 365 kilometres north.

Catcheway's disappearance has since become an RCMP homicide investigation and investigators believe her body is somewhere between Grand Rapids and Portage la Prairie.

"Somebody has information. Somebody knows," Bernice Catcheway said during Friday's search. "Come forward, end this for us."



"We always end up coming back to Dakota Tipi," says Wilfred Catcheway. (CBC)

Cook said she understands if Pashe is apprehensive about searchers going through his community. Her own reserve has been the focus of searches and it can create distrust in the community.

"People have been painted, because they were, like, at a party, then they must know something, you know?" she said.

"[But] these people probably, just like the rest of us, they want Jennifer to be found."

To that end, it's important to allow the searches to happen, she said.

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## Heidi Cook statement

Misipawistik (Grand Rapids) and surrounding territory have been ground zero in the search for Jennifer Catcheway since she went missing in 2008. People in our community understand better than most the uneasiness and dishonour that goes with being the target of a search, having the distinction as the last place Jennifer was seen alive. I understand Chief Pashe's fears of having his community known in this light. However, I hope and I pray that Chief Pashe will allow his compassion for the family of Jennifer Catcheway to overcome his fear and that the search will resume.

The people of Misipawistik are not all murderers by association. Every year members of our community welcome Jennifer's parents, offering support and kindness in whichever way they can. Throughout the year our hunters, fishers, and others who travel our territory remain vigilant in looking for signs of Jennifer. Searching for a missing person is a complex emotional battle; hoping and dreading at the same time that finally, this time, she will be found.

The uncertainty that lingers as long as Jennifer is missing may be more damaging than the search. Rumours and speculation about what could have happened create suspicion between neighbours and allows distrust to infect the community. Finding Jennifer is the most immediate thing that we can do to counter this negativity.

My message to Chief Pashe is to please allow the search to resume, with or without a warrant.

My message to Jennifer's parents, Wilfred and Bernice, is our hearts and prayers are with you, as always. Bring Jennifer home.

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## **'Damned if I do and damned if I don't'**



Bernice Catcheway says somebody knows where their daughter is. She is pleading for them to come forward and bring them closure. (CBC)

Pashe said he's torn over the search because he wants the Catcheway family to find their daughter, but he can't give them free rein in his community.

"I'll be the first to grab a shovel and dig," he said. "[But] I'm damned if I do and damned if I don't, because half of my people say [let them dig] and half say don't.

"I, as leader of the community, am between a rock and a hard place. But at the end run, I just gotta protect my people."

Dakota Tipi "bent over backwards" in 2008 for the original search, Pashe said, explaining meals were provided to the searchers, who were also given use of the community hall as well as some money from the band.

Last week's search was the fourth one on the reserve, he said.

The band and council wholeheartedly said "go ahead" when the Catcheways asked permission last week, Pashe said. But then they showed up with a backhoe, he added.

"I asked them to call electrical, Manitoba Hydro," Pashe said, explaining he was concerned about the lines being dug up.

"They were almost ready to dig up our cemetery here — the big machine was knocking down small growth, and that's sacred."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/catcheway-search-dakota-tipi-1.3299618>

## **Guest Editorial: Time for comprehensive inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women**

Vancouver Sun November 4, 2015



Highway 16 between Prince Rupert and Prince George, known as The Highway of Tears, where many women have vanished or been found murdered over a period of more than 40 years.

The plot has thickened considerably since calls first came for a national inquiry into murdered and missing aboriginal women. The newly elected federal government will have to take into account some disturbing new twists in what is an ongoing tale of woe.

The Trudeau Liberals have stated such an inquiry will go ahead, But such inquiries too often carry prohibitive costs, and their recommendations are frequently ignored by the government of the day.

For that reason, a Liberal government probe into the plight of aboriginal women should have a clearly defined focus, a one-year deadline, and a properly budget. Further, the government should issue a pledge to act on any reasonable recommendations that result.

In light of recent events, a federal inquiry will need to go beyond an originally conceived mandate relating to missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Recent accusations from aboriginal women in Val d'Or, Que. that members of the Sûreté du Québec sexually abused them are alarming.

Any allegations about abuse committed by police — and at this point that's what they are, lest we forget the unsubstantiated sexual abuse accusations levelled against John Furlong — deserve scrutiny.

A federal inquiry would also need to carefully consider B.C.'s handling of events surrounding the Highway of Tears. Two years have passed since Justice Wally Oppal called for a safer means of transport along Highway 18, to prevent the hitchhiking that led to some women having gone missing during their travels. The B.C. government has yet to establish any means of public transit along the dangerous route.

The civilian Review and Complaints Commission, a civilian oversight body of the RCMP, will soon be sending an interim report to the federal force following its investigation into the treatment of indigenous women and girls in northern B.C.

That investigation was triggered by a 2013 Human Rights Watch report containing allegations of women being strip-searched by male police officers and of the rape of a homeless woman by four officers.

In order to fully understand what is going on regarding missing and murdered aboriginal women in this country it may well be necessary to comprehensively scrutinize the manner in which law enforcement agencies are handling cases involving indigenous women.

And in light of the deleted emails associated with the B.C. government's actions regarding the Highway of Tears, perhaps it also is necessary to probe the manner in which bureaucrats deal with issues involving victimized indigenous women.

Read more:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/guest+editorial+time+comprehensive+inquiry+into+murdered+missing+aboriginal+women/11493258/story.html#ixzz3qf8m4pkz>

## **Special Topic: Residential Schools, TRC, and '60s Scoop**

**Residential schools archive trying to  
balance survivor privacy, public education**





The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at the University of Manitoba will house millions of records collected by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The Canadian Press

Published Monday, November 2, 2015 5:57AM CST

Last Updated Monday, November 2, 2015 7:45AM CST

An archive housing the national memory of residential schools is set to open its doors, but must balance concerns from survivors with educating the public about one of the darkest chapters in Canadian history.

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at the University of Manitoba will house millions of records collected by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The records -- some of which were sealed for decades -- include everything from school inspection reports to heartbreaking testimony from survivors who detailed graphic accounts of sexual and physical abuse.

For survivors from across the country who have met with centre director Ry Moran, the archive is deeply personal and threatens to revictimize them if it isn't handled carefully.

Survivors who testified before the commission were allowed to dictate what part of their stories they wanted to be part of the public record. But government and church records in the archive contain personal medical information, racist language, details about family relationships and the names of survivors and their family members.

"While we have a very pressing and very real mandate to make as much of the collection available as possible, we're also being told to do no harm in the release of the information and do things in as respectful a way as possible," Moran said in an interview.

"What we're hearing from survivors is, 'We want Canadians to know what it was like for us in those schools, but we don't necessarily want Canadians to have access to all of our personal, intimate details.'"

About 150,000 First Nations, Inuit and Metis children were taken from their families and forced to attend the government schools over much of the last century in a bid to "take the Indian out of the child." The last school closed outside Regina in 1996.



The \$60-million commission was part of a landmark compensation deal between Ottawa, the Crown and residential school survivors. It visited hundreds of communities and heard testimony from 7,000 survivors.

The archive's opening ceremonies are to be held next Tuesday and Wednesday. At the beginning, Moran said, the centre will be cautious about what records are publicly available.

Public access may change over time but, for now, the wound of residential schools is still very raw, Moran said.

"These, in many ways, are their records first, and it's time to put them in the driver's seat in terms of what happens with this material. For so long, they weren't in the driver's seat. It was disclosed by government agencies or not. It was locked up by the church archive or not."

Commissioner Marie Wilson said the centre's goal is to further reconciliation -- something that "can't happen in sealed vaults."

She said there is no rush to immediately disclose all the commission's government or church records. Names can eventually be redacted from government documents and the testimony from survivors will speak for itself.

"Repeatedly, people say the most compelling part of all was hearing first-hand from survivors," Wilson said. "We've got 7,000 statements. There is plenty there to satisfy the appetite of people just beginning to learn about all this."

Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson, who represents northern Manitoba First Nations, said centre is an important part of the journey toward healing. But it will take time and care must be taken not to revictimize survivors.

"There is healing in looking at atrocities right in the face and then moving past it," said North Wilson, whose mother went to a residential school. "I hope that this will help a lot of people heal."

**Direct Link:** <http://winnipeg.ctvnews.ca/residential-schools-archive-trying-to-balance-survivor-privacy-public-education-1.2638216>

## **Indigenous children removed from homes in the 1960s begin to heal**

**For three decades across Canada, thousands of aboriginal children were taken from their homes and adopted.**

Thousands of indigenous children across Canada were taken from their homes and adopted into white families during the Sixties Scoop.

**By:** [Lauren Pelley](#) Staff Reporter, Published on Mon Nov 02 2015

KEMPTVILLE — The scent of tobacco and sage fills the air as members of Canada's aboriginal communities gather around a fire on the shores of the Rideau River.

Each takes a turn fanning medicinal smoke towards their bodies in a cleansing smudging ritual. Then, one by one, the 40 or so attendees of this Indigenous Adoptee Gathering introduce themselves to the group. Some are from Ontario, others from Manitoba or the Yukon. Some are Cree, others Métis or Ojibway.

Most are members of a stolen generation.

Beginning in the mid-1960s — and for several decades after — thousands of indigenous children across Canada were removed from their homes and typically placed with white middle-class families in Canada and abroad.

Patrick Johnston, author of the 1983 report *Native Children and the Child Welfare System*, dubbed it the Sixties Scoop.



Duane and Colleen prepare a fire for roasting marshmallows for the kids of Indigenous Adoptee Gathering attendees. The adults, meanwhile, participate in a sweat lodge by the Rideau river during the first day of the gathering in Kemptville in August.

Those children are now adults, sharing their stories of emotional, physical and sexual abuse, mental illness and a sense of isolation from being torn between Euro-Canadian and indigenous culture.

“It’s been a long healing journey for a lot of us to get to the point where we’re OK to just be an adoptee, and then find others like us,” said Colleen Cardinal, an adoptee and co-organizer of the August gathering in Kemptville, Ont. “It’s taken us our whole lives to get to this point.”

The Sixties Scoop wasn't a government policy, but rather a noticeable trend once mandatory residential school education was phased out in the 1950s and 1960s.

In 1966, the federal government signed an agreement with the provinces to share the costs of extending social services under the Canada Assistance Plan, according to the [Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission](#).

"No Aboriginal people or organizations were consulted about these changes, and there was no commitment to preserve Aboriginal culture or to provide for local Aboriginal control over child welfare services," reads a report from the commission. "These services were to be delivered by non-Aboriginal agencies employing non-Aboriginal social workers."

Child welfare services were expanded to indigenous communities across Canada through the late 1960s, which "left a profound and negative impact on these communities," notes the report.

"There was no publicity for years and years about the brutalization of our families and children by the larger Canadian society," one member of the indigenous community told the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry launched in 1988 by Manitoba's provincial government.

"Kidnapping was called placement in foster homes. Exporting aboriginal children to the U.S. was called preparing Indian children for the future. Parents who were heartbroken by the destruction of their families were written off as incompetent people."

Manitoba's government established a review committee on "Indian and Métis Adoptions and Placements" in the 1980s, headed by Associate Chief Family Court Judge Edwin Kimelman, and imposed a halt on out-of-province placements of indigenous children.



Women gather pine leaves that will be used for the sweat lodge down by the Rideau River in August.

After reviewing the files of every indigenous Manitoban child adopted by an out-of-province family, Kimelman wrote in a 1984 report that "cultural genocide" had been taking place in a "systematic, routine manner."

While not every placement of an indigenous child in the Canadian adoption system was a result of the Sixties Scoop, the number of children removed and placed into foster care or adoptive families likely numbered in the tens of thousands.

In British Columbia, for instance, only 29 indigenous children were in provincial care in 1951. By 1964, the number had jumped to more than 1,400.

The trend across Canada was similar, and by the 1970s around one-third of all children in state care were indigenous — with about 70 per cent of those placed into non-indigenous homes.

In 1983, Johnston estimated that, nation-wide, indigenous children were “4.5 times more likely” than non-indigenous children to be in the care of child welfare authorities, according to the commission.

Even now, a disproportionate number of indigenous children are in foster care, with government data showing they comprised 30 to 40 per cent of children placed in out-of-home care between 2000 and 2002 — even though indigenous children make up less than 5 per cent of the total child population of Canada.

The numbers tell only part of the story, of course.

Adoptees and advocates have since filled in the rest, detailing the devastating impact of the Sixties Scoop on a generation.

“In retrospect, the wholesale apprehension of Native children during the Sixties Scoop appears to have been a terrible mistake,” Johnston wrote.

“While some individual children may have benefitted, many did not. Nor did their families. And Native culture suffered one more of many severe blows. Unfortunately, the damage is still being done.”



Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger apologizes for what has become known as the Sixties Scoop at the Manitoba Legislature in Winnipeg in June.

## **What comes next?**

In June, Manitoba became the [first province to offer a formal apology](#) to thousands of victims with Premier Greg Selinger promising the topic will be included in the provincial school curriculum. But [what should be done](#) throughout the rest of Canada? A few organizations offered their viewpoints of how the federal and provincial governments should be handling the aftermath of the Sixties Scoop.

### **Assembly of First Nations**

Perry Bellegarde, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, said the Sixties Scoop is a “shameful reality” whose negative effects on First Nations children and their families continue.

“This is no more evident than the fact that there are more First Nations children in foster care today than at the height of the residential school era. In some provinces, such as Manitoba, almost 90 per cent of the children in foster care are aboriginal,” he noted.

The AFN has filed a human rights complaint on this matter against the federal government, but Bellegarde said the decision has been delayed another two months.

“We will continue to fight for fairness and justice for First Nations children and families,” he added.

### **Congress of Aboriginal Peoples**

At the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples assembly in Ottawa in September, a resolution passed calling on each of the provinces to issue an apology for their role in the Sixties Scoop.

Ron Swain, national vice-chief of the group representing aboriginal people living off-reserve, called Manitoba’s apology a “great first step,” and one that should be followed broadly across the country.

“The different provinces — and even the federal government — should be making apologies and giving financial support. Some people are trying to find their birth families, and that takes resources,” he said.

### **Origins Canada**

For years, Origins Canada — a non-profit agency that supports people separated by adoption — has been pushing for a national inquiry into past policies and practices surrounding adoption in Canada.

“This is something that was achieved by Origins Australia, which resulted in funding for an apology to all those separated by adoption in that country, followed by funding for mental health education,” said Valerie Andrews, executive director of Origins Canada.

The concerns of Canada’s indigenous communities and Sixties Scoop survivors will be part of the discussion, according to Andrews, who said Origins Canada hopes to have a parliamentary breakfast this spring with the new set of MPs to bring this topic back to the table.

“Once a national inquiry is achieved, as was done in Australia, every person has a voice,” she said. “Every person can make their testimony to that inquiry, whether they be an aboriginal person or non-aboriginal person.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/11/02/indigenous-children-removed-from-homes-in-the-1960s-just-now-beginning-to-heal.html>

## **New Indigenous Affairs Minister speaks reconciliation with sage in her boots, loaned eagle feather in hand**

[National News](#) | November 5, 2015 by [Jorge Barrera](#)



**(A close-up of the bundle carried by Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett to her swearing-in. APTN/Photo)**

**Jorge Barrera**

**APTN National News**

**OTTAWA**—Before she was sworn-in as minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Carolyn Bennett placed cedar from Georgian Bay, a shell, sage and a small inuksuk into a bundle patterned like a Metis sash.



She was also given an eagle feather by Claudette Commanda, the grand-daughter of the renowned late Algonquin Elder William Commanda, to carry with her on her trip into the federal cabinet.

Claudette Commanda also put sage in both of Bennett's boots "to make sure that I would be able to go forward in a good way."

Bennett, a physician who represents an urban Toronto riding, gripped these items in her hands as she walked with the sage in her boots into the Rideau Hall ballroom for the official christening of the new Justin Trudeau government Wednesday.



Carolyn Bennett sworn-in as minister of the re-named Indigenous and Northern Affairs ministry.

She held the bundle when she faced reporters later in the day for a scrum inside Centre Block on Parliament Hill.

Most of the new cabinet ministers who were paraded before the microphones and cameras answered questions by saying they still had to study their files, but Bennett, who was a long-time Aboriginal affairs critic while in opposition, was ready with substantive answers.

And the main question that emerged from the cacophony of shouting reporters was on the Liberal promise to hold an inquiry into the high number of murdered and missing Indigenous women.

Bennett said the new Trudeau government wanted to get their promise right by first focusing on speaking with the families of the missing and murdered about their hopes for the inquiry. She said the Trudeau government plans to launch a pre-consultation process similar to what was conducted by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples which was triggered by the 1990 Oka Crisis.

"We have heard from many places that is the reason why the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples was successful, because the pre-consultation was very effective," said Bennett. "It means we can't just step out and announce an inquiry. It has to actually do the things that the families need. They want not only justice, they want support, but they also want to make sure this doesn't happen to any other families after this. We have to end this tragedy, this epidemic."



Bennett also repeated a promise Trudeau made during a town hall interview with *APTN* that a Liberal government would review all legislation to ensure it respected Aboriginal and treaty rights and reflected the principles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

She also said First Nation, Inuit and Metis leaders would be included in the development of new legislation affecting their rights and peoples.

“That is what we will do. As you know, ‘It is nothing about us without us.’ This means a partnership...First Nation, Inuit and Metis will be looking at legislation with us,” said Bennett.

Bennett will also be leading a renamed department. Aboriginal Affairs, known as Indian Affairs until 2011, will now be called Indigenous and Northern Affairs.

The minister said the name change came at the suggestion of Indigenous people she met across the country.

Bennett takes over a department pivotal to the existing construction of the relationship between Ottawa and Indigenous peoples and that relationship has reached one of its lowest ebbs in recent memory.

The previous Conservative government of Stephen Harper made no substantial gains on the file and spent hundreds of millions of dollars fighting Aboriginal rights cases in court. Its most spectacular failure came after First Nation chiefs walked away from a \$1.9 billion education deal because they couldn’t accept the legislation that came attached to the money.

The Trudeau government has promised to invest \$2.6 billion in new funding for K-to-12 education.

Bennett will also be confronted soon with an expected ruling from the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on a discrimination complaint against Ottawa over its underfunding of child and family services on reserves.

The department also faces billions of dollars in infrastructure needs at the community level, from housing, to school buildings to water and waste water systems.

Then there are the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s recommendations the Trudeau government has also promised to implement.

These are but a few of the massive matters she will face which also include revamping the comprehensive claims process, rescuing the beleaguered Specific Claims Tribunal and coming to grips with a legal landscape altered by last year’s *Tsilhqot’in* Supreme Court decision.

Bennett appears prepared to take these things in stride.

She said she will also follow another piece of advice given during her travels.

Bennett said she was told to, “Consider yourself the minister of reconciliation.”

And that is what she said she plans to do.

**Direct Link:** <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/11/05/new-indigenous-affairs-minister-speaks-reconciliation-with-sage-in-her-boots-loaned-eagle-feather-in-hand/>

## **Special Topic: International Indigenous Populations**

### **Feds: Shops sold Filipino jewelry as Native American**

#### **Federal authorities offer new details on Old Town, Santa Fe plaza raids**

UPDATED 7:03 PM MDT Oct 29, 2015

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. —Federal authorities have charged three New Mexicans accused of selling Filipino-made jewelry as Native American jewelry.

Sixteen search warrants were executed in New Mexico and California Wednesday. As part of the warrants, federal authorities searched two shops in Albuquerque’s Old Town - Gallery 8 and Galleria Azul -- as well as shops in Santa Fe, Gallup and Zuni.

The four-count indictment charges Nael Ali, 51, Mohammad Abed Manasra, 53, and Christina Bowen, 41, with conspiracy to violate the Indian Arts and Crafts Act and three violations of the act.

Ali is the owner of the two Old Town jewelry stores that were raided and purport to specialize in the sale of Native American jewelry. Bowen was formerly employed as a store manager by Ali. Manasra holds himself out as a wholesaler of Native American jewelry.

If convicted, they face a maximum of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

This international raid comes after the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service teamed up with the Indian Arts and Crafts Board in 2012 to find people violating the Indian Arts and Crafts Act.

“The Indian Arts Craft Act prohibits the sale or display or for sale of any goods in a manner that falsely suggests that it is an Indian product,” said board Chairman Harvey Pratt.

He added when someone buys the fake product unknowingly they lose the integrity of the product.

“This case demonstrates our willingness to prosecute those who falsely market products as ‘Indian Made’ and thus undermine the livelihoods of Native American artists and craftspeople, many of whom are responsible for carrying precious spiritual and artistic knowledge from one generation to another,” said Acting Associate Attorney General Stuart Delery.

Operation El Zuni, as it’s being called, is the largest investigation of its kind since the act was founded in 1935. U.S. Attorney Damon Martinez said these stings are more than just about enforcing the law, they are about protecting and preserving the cultural heritage of Native Americans.

He hopes these raids let violators know they aren’t safe.

“We’re hoping that this will send a message to those folks who are selling the fake material, the fake jewelry under the false pretenses that they will get the message that this is important and they should watch out,” Martinez said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.koat.com/news/feds-3-sold-filipino-jewelry-as-native-american/36123704>

## **A Native American tribe in Montana hopes its coal reserves will provide economic opportunity**

[The Takeaway](#)

October 29, 2015 · 10:30 AM EDT

By [T.J. Raphael](#) ([follow](#))



Westmoreland Resources' Absaloka Mine in southeastern Montana is shown on May 30, 2008. The mine is on Crow Nation land.

In the United States, many non-native people subscribe to a certain mythology about Native Americans — a mythology that casts them as stewards of the earth working in harmony with the land.

It's a mythology we've seen play out in Disney films like "Pocahontas," in Oscar winning films like "Dances with Wolves," and in every cowboy and Indian film of the golden age of Hollywood.

In reality, of course, Native peoples have had the vast majority of their land taken away, and they've been left with very few natural resources to survive off of. One of the few resources left, at least for one tribe, is coal.

The Crow Nation in Montana, also known as the Apsaalooke, have an abundance of coal on their reservation. They already have one open-pit mine, and soon, they're hoping to open another. In cooperation with Cloud Peak Energy — one of the biggest coal companies in the country — the tribe plans to mine 1.4 billion tons of coal for customers in Asia.

“For the Crow, this really comes down to self sufficiency,” says Amy Martin, a freelance radio producer based in Missoula, Montana, who has done extensive [reporting on the Crow tribe](#) with [Inside Energy](#), a public media collaboration focused on America's energy issues.

Native Americans of all tribes have suffered a long and brutal history of oppression, something that's left many indigenous communities without the means to provide for themselves.

“In the case of the Crow, they have this resource — they have about 9 billion tons of coal on their reservation,” says Martin. “At least for most of the people I've talked to, that

feels like a way to pull themselves out of poverty, to provide for their families, and provide for their community.”

While this mining project promises great financial rewards for the tribe, it also comes at a time when protests against dirty coal are on the rise.

“I think some people are concerned about climate change and global warming,” says Martin. “I hesitate to try to speak for everyone, but from the people I’ve talked to, it feels like that’s the 30,000-foot level [issue], while there’s this very immediate need staring them in the face.”

Unemployment on the Crow reservation hovers between 25 and 50 percent. Housing is scarce, and there’s often not enough money for basic services and infrastructure. Darrin Old Coyote, chairman of the Crow Tribe, says the decision to develop coal has to be understood with these facts in mind — and in the context of 200 years of attacks on Native Americans.

“Assimilation, warfare, smallpox — all of that we’ve survived,” says Old Coyote. “And we’re ‘gonna continue moving forward to survive, and the only way I know how now is to develop our coal. What I’m doing is in the best interest of my people.”

Old Coyote’s comments have been echoed by others in the community, including Jason Cummins, the principal at Crow Agency school. His father worked in the mine, and he sees families who benefit from coal every day.

“To give your kid warm clothes in the winter and food in their belly — that’s what every parent desires to do,” he says. “The coal mine in our community, that’s the opportunity it brings. It helps for self-sufficiency and to be able to determine our own future.”

Though the global risk of climate change seems small for a native family struggling to get by, the Crow tribe might be aligning itself with a dying industry that may not serve the community’s needs in the long term. Since 2012, nearly 60 coal-burning power plants have partially or completely shut down in the US.

“If this mine had been developed 40 years ago, it’d be a very different story,” says Martin. “But right now, coal prices are at a 10-year low, and this all depends on getting the coal out of the United States. There’s going to be some domestic demand for a while, but to really make money, they need to ship it overseas, particularly to Asia.”

In order to get coal from the mines to places like Vietnam and South Korea, a new ports must be developed in Washington State.

“Those ports are very controversial,” says Martin. “There are actually other Native American tribes who are protesting those ports because one of them is near their land. It’s not clear that those ports will be permitted and put in, and if they’re not put in, it’s

unclear that Cloud Peak Energy will actually develop all of the coal that they have the rights to now.”

These factors are concerning to at least a few members of the tribe, like Carolyn Pease-Lopez, a Montana state legislator from the Crow reservation.

“I just hope that there's some other resource that we have that we can count on,” she says. “I mean, if the markets start declining for our commodity that we do have, I just hope that we're finding something else that we can support our people with so that our families can be fed and our communities can be rebuilt.”

Does Rep. Pease-Lopez see another viable option on the horizon for the Crow people?

“Actually, I don’t,” she says.

*This [story](#) first aired as an interview on PRI's [The Takeaway](#), a public radio program that invites you to be part of the American conversation.*

**Direct Link:** <http://www.pri.org/stories/2015-10-29/native-american-tribe-montana-hopes-its-coal-reserves-will-provide-economic>

## Indigenous Games Bring Fashion to Brazil's Interior



A Pataxo Indian, of Brazil, attends the World Indigenous Games in Palmas, Brazil, Oct. 29, 2015.

October 31, 2015 12:50 AM

PALMAS, BRAZIL —

Forget New York, Milan or even Paris: With nearly 2,000 native people from around the world rocking their finest traditional garb at the World Indigenous Games, there's not a catwalk in the world that can compete with this dusty agricultural outpost.

Awash in a riot of tropical feathers, draped in endless stands of eye-popping beads and topped off by headdresses that look like they deserve their own zip codes, host city Palmas has earned itself the title of world fashion capital - at least for the nine days of the event.

The venue is bubbling with so many bold, audacious looks that the visitor doesn't know where to look next. Eyes dart from the Bolivian women in their bowler hats, to dancers from Canada in buttery suede dresses hung with jangling metal ornaments, and come to rest finally on the Amazon-dwelling Kamayura men whose headdresses look like giant spider webs made out of feathers.

The "head roach" proudly sported by Canadian delegate Lamarr Oksasikewiyin was another architectural feat. The towering Mohawk is made from a deer tail, the feathers of a teenage eagle and ethically extracted porcupine hair - plucked, he assured, from a live animal which wanders away after the process, dignity bruised but body intact.

"Normally it stands up really straight," said Oksasikewiyin, a 46-year-old schoolteacher of the Nehiyaw people of Saskatchewan. "But it's so humid here, it's really quite droopy."

It's not just the event's indigenous participants who are getting in on the sartorial action.

Non-indigenous spectators, most of them residents of sleepy Palmas, lined up to get temporary tattoos like the head-to-toe designs many Brazilian indigenous people use. Made with inky dye extracted from the jenipapo fruit, the tattoos were applied with little twigs for \$1.25-\$2.50 a pop.

While most people were content to small designs on their triceps or calves, a bold few took the plunge, stripping down to their underwear to get whole-body paint jobs or even intricate webs all over their faces.

"It only lasts maximum one week," Rivaldo Warinmytygi, of Brazil's Tapirape people, reassured one would-be customer. "But it goes away even faster if you're taking three baths a day."

Which, with temperatures exceeding 45 degrees Celsius (113 degrees Fahrenheit) during the first few days of the Games, you just might.





An indigenous woman from Pataxo tribe poses for photos after participating in a parade of indigenous beauty during the first World Games for Indigenous Peoples in Palmas, Brazil, Oct. 29, 2015.

Headdresses have proven another popular product among the indigenous vendors hawking everything from so-called "nose whistles" - little wooden contraptions that fit over nose and mouth to emit convincing bird calls - to an almost life-sized broad-snouted caiman made from an artfully burned tree trunk. Among the local teenage girls, headdresses made out of macaw feathers were the must-have accessory.

Inspectors from Brazil's wildlife protection agency were at the games, handing out pamphlets in an attempt to combat the practice of killing as many as eight birds to make a single headdress.

While Brazilian law allows indigenous people to use clothing and accessories made from wild animal parts, they're forbidden from selling them. Still, the threat of fines up to \$1,250 and possible jail time for the buyer appeared to do little to dampen the enthusiasm for feather headdresses.

For indigenous Brazilian Yara Brasil, who was sporting a fringed suede jacket from Canada and Australian crocodile boots and a Davy Crockett hat of her own confection, the games were a chance to expand her eclectic collection of native clothing from around the world.

"I'm a walking cultural exchange," she said, showing off the profusion of new jewel-colored beads she'd been given.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.voanews.com/content/indigenous-games-bring-fashion-to-brazils-interior/3030855.html>

# A Huge Fire in the Amazon Threatens Thousands of Indigenous People and an Uncontacted Tribe

By [Eva Hershaw](#)

October 30, 2015 | 4:30 pm

A fire burning across northern Brazil for the past two months has scorched nearly half of the Arariboia indigenous territory in the state of Maranhão. Many suspect that loggers in the area started the fire, which has surrounded an isolated group of Awá-Guajá Indians.

The Arariboia indigenous territory is home to an estimated 12,000 people belonging to the Guajajara ethnic group, and to another 80 Awá-Guajá Indians, not previously contacted by the outside world. Teams on the ground have reported abandoned Awá-Guajá structures in the area, and believe the group is attempting to outrun the blaze.

"Besides putting out the fire, the greatest concern is about ensuring the survival of these people," said Danicley de Aguiar, a Forest Campaigner with Greenpeace Brazil. "Much of their agriculture has been destroyed and access to hunting will probably be affected, which will make it very difficult for the Indians to find food."

On Tuesday, the organization released aerial photos showing the vast devastation caused by wildfires in the region and calling for a more substantial government response. Local indigenous leader Sônia Guajajara, who accompanied them on the trip, said that the community had identified problem spots and reported them to officials in September, weeks before authorities arrived.

The National Indian Foundation has reportedly earmarked 461,000 reais (\$120,000) to fight the fire, and in recent weeks, the National Center for Forest Fire Prevention and Combat has sent a reported 330 fire fighters to fight the blaze as part of its Operation Awá, according to Brazilian media.

But prior to their deployment, the job was left to self-fashioned firefighters known as the Guajajara Guardians. The group has attracted attention in the past for its opposition to illegal logging activity on their territory.

"The local indigenous people have been trying to put the fires out to no avail, and the Brazilian government has now stepped in, but far too late," said Sarah Shenker, Brazil campaigner at Survival International, a global organization working to protect indigenous populations. "As soon as they were aware of the fire, it was their duty to go and put it out, and especially in a forest that the Indians completely depend upon for their survival."

While the cause of the fire remains unknown, loggers are the principal suspect. One theory says the loggers are retaliating for monitoring of their activities by indigenous groups.

"The Guardians have been taking matters into their own hands, carrying out expeditions in the area trying to drive the loggers out," Shenker said. "There are rumors that this could come in response to these efforts."

The fires mark the latest affront to the Arariboia territory and nearby indigenous lands, which have long been at the center of conflict between indigenous populations, illegal loggers, and the authorities that have attempted to intervene. The territory has been severely deforested through the years, creating a drier, more vulnerable environment in which fire can easily spread.

A recent government report estimated that there are more than 1,000 active fires in the Amazonas state, while nearly 190,000 fires have been reported countrywide since the beginning of the year. The number marks a 23 percent increase from last year, and a 209 percent increase from 2013.

Drought has plagued other parts of the country, including the São Paulo, where authorities have said the water shortage is "critical." Other central states, such as Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, Tocantins, and Minas Gerais have also shown a spike in drought-fueled fires.

Earlier this year, President Dilma Rousseff promised to achieve zero illegal deforestation in the Amazon by 2030 while restoring 120,000 square kilometers that had been cleared. She also announced, in September, that Brazil would reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 37 percent in 2025 and 43 percent by 2030.

But environmentalists say the goals are weak and noted that policies have yet to slow forest loss. According to a report by the group IMAZON, deforestation in the region between August 2014 and June 2015, had increased by 65 percent compared to the previous period.

For now, as authorities and indigenous leaders continue to fight fires that Greenpeace says stretch across more than 60 miles, they are hoping that the rainy season, which normally begins in October, will bring much needed relief soon.

**Direct Link:** <https://news.vice.com/article/a-huge-fire-in-the-amazon-threatens-thousands-of-indigenous-people-and-an-uncontacted-tribe>

## **Native American Tribes File Suit Over NorCal Highway Project**

October 30, 2015 1:13 PM



Highway 101 (Getty Images)

SAN FRANCISCO (CBS/AP) — Two Native American tribes have filed a lawsuit claiming state transportation officials have destroyed Native cultural sites during construction of a Highway 101 bypass in Northern California.

The Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians and Round Valley Indian Tribes say in the lawsuit filed Friday that the [project](#) near the city of Willits in Mendocino County was undertaken without adequate consultation with Native American groups. They say it has destroyed an ancestral village site and blocked a salmon passage used by their tribes for centuries.

The tribes are calling on a judge to halt the project.

**ALSO READ:** [Sonoma County Family Returns Coastal Land To Native American Tribe](#)

A call to a California Department of Transportation spokesman was not immediately returned.

The 5.9-mile long bypass would reroute Highway 101 through an area known as Little Lake Valley.

**Direct Link:** <http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2015/10/30/native-american-tribes-file-suit-over-norcal-highway-project/>

## Kolpack: Brownotter is role model worth following

By [Jeff Kolpack](#) on Oct 30, 2015 at 2:31 a.m.

FARGO - The final two college choices for Brittany Brownotter came down to the University of Mary in Bismarck and North Dakota State. And when it comes to track and

field, the Bison are about as good as it gets for a mid-major Division I program. So you thought it would be an easy choice.

But there is more to the Bismarck High graduate and North Dakota Gatorade Athlete of the Year in cross country and track than running away from the competition. She's also a champion powwow dancer, and running away from her family just didn't seem like the thing to do. So she picked Mary.

"It was a good experience for me, and I wanted to be close to home," she said.

Brittany also kept a close eye on what was happening in Fargo, specifically with standout runners Erin Teschuk and Maddie Van Beek. Being around that kind of success was just too tempting, so she transferred to NDSU. She was right to do so. She's part of a powerful program that will be going for its fourth Summit League title in five years Saturday in Brookings, S.D.

"Last year, seeing what they were doing on a national level was very motivating and inspiring, and it's something I knew I wanted to be a part of," Brittany said.

Motivating? Inspiring? That could just as well describe what she is or at least could be to the younger members of her Standing Rock Sioux tribe. If there is a little Native American girl out there looking for somebody to be like when she grows up, Brittany Brownotter would be an ideal role model.

She loves her school. She loves her family. She loves her heritage.

There are pictures in the Brownotter home of a baby Brittany dancing in her Native American regalia, an art that she still does today and will always do in the future. Every weekend in the summer, she dances in a powwow as a way to represent her ancestors.

"We just go out there and dance for those who cannot," she said. "It's an amazing experience that I'm glad is part of my culture and I'm proud of it."

She's good at it, too. In 2007, for example, she won the Junior Girls Jingle at the United Tribes International Powwow in Bismarck. There are times, Brittany said, when a competition goes from noon to midnight, if not later, while wearing a dress with around 350 jingles on it. It's not easy.

"It's definitely a calf muscle workout," she said. "Unfortunately, it takes away from my time running so I don't do it as often, but when I do, it's refreshing and uplifting for me because that's a huge part of who I am."

Brittany's ancestry includes the athletic ability of her father, Brady Brownotter, who was a great runner in his own right having been a multiple North Dakota state track and field and cross country champion for Fort Yates High School in Standing Rock. He won back-to-back Class B cross country titles in 1989 and 1990.

"He's done it and understands what I'm going through on a daily basis," Brittany said.

On Saturday, Teschuk is expected to lead the pack for the Bison, but Brittany may not be far behind. She was the top Bison finisher in two meets where Teschuk rested, including a title in the UND Ron Pynn Classic two weeks ago.

When Brittany first transferred to NDSU, she would at times walk into the Ellig Indoor Track & Field Complex and just "sit," as she said. She would look at all the title banners and names with the dream of contributing to one herself.

"The atmosphere is just motivating here," she said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.inforum.com/sports/3872066-kolpack-brownotter-role-model-worth-following>

## **Native American parent calls for Redskins clothing ban in Montgomery Co. Public Schools**

#UberKITTENS happened in more than 50 cities today.

By: [Tom Fitzgerald](#)

**Posted:** Oct 30 2015 06:03PM EDT

**Updated:** Oct 30 2015 06:13PM EDT

24 reactions

**SILVER SPRING, Md.** - The Redskins name controversy has touched down in all sorts of areas. Now it is in front of the Montgomery County school board.

A Native American parent said he wants clothing showing the team's name and mascot banned and he is using the school system's own policy against offensive clothing as the basis for his argument.

When Jared Hautamaki took his kindergartner to Highland Elementary School in Silver Spring last month, he saw something that was out of bounds.



Native American parent calls for Redskins clothing ban in Montgomery Co. Public Schools

"We walked up to school and saw the principal in burgundy and gold," he said.

It wasn't the colors that offended Hautamaki. But as a Native American, he said the Redskins name and logo are racial slurs and he wants them banned from Montgomery County Public Schools. Hautamaki is a member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. He went to Montgomery County's school board demanding that they enforce its own dress code policy that clearly states:

Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing to school. Clothing that offends others or disrupts learning inappropriate. Clothing that includes references to gangs, drugs, alcohol, and sex is not acceptable.

"The school district has a policy that says any clothing that is offensive is inappropriate for the school environment," Hautamaki explained.

The interim school superintendent sent Hautamaki a letter referencing "Washington's football team." It explained how in 2001, Montgomery County decided to "adopt different mascots for schools that had previously used Native American imagery or logos." But as for the debate on banning such clothes, the letter says schools will "monitor its impact."

It turns out about 40 parents at Highland Elementary School signed their name to a testimony delivered to the Montgomery County Board of Education. They say the Redskins name is not offensive and they do not want this school policy to change.

Highland Elementary parent Vanessa Miranda spoke for the group that wants students and staff to keep the right to wear Redskins clothing. "This is not just about the Redskins team or the word," she said at a school board meeting. "None of us are trying to dehumanize Native Americans, but rather demonstrating our American love of football." But Hautamaki disagrees and said if there is a policy on offensive clothing and he is offended by it, the school system should act. "They wouldn't let kids come to school with a Confederate flag or a swastika on their shirt," he argued. A school spokesperson



declined to speak on camera with us, but instead wrote an email saying they are dealing with the issue in a "respectful manner."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.fox5dc.com/news/local-news/41545243-story>

## **Tumultuous World Indigenous Games wraps up in Brazil**



A Brazilian Bororo indigenous attends the closing ceremony of the World Indigenous Games, in Palmas, Brazil, Saturday, Oct. 31, 2015. The first edition of the World Indigenous Games, which brought nearly 2,000 delegates representing first nations from across the globe to a remote outpost in the heart of Brazil, was wrapping up on Saturday after nine hypnotic days of traditional sports, dancing, trading and inter-cultural exchange. (Eraldo Peres/Associated Press)

By Jenny Barchfield AP November 1

PALMAS, Brazil — The first World Indigenous Games closed Saturday night with a pumping ceremony that brought together nearly 2,000 participants from more than two dozen countries for a monumental extravaganza.

Nothing quite like it had ever rolled into Palmas, a sunbaked outpost in the geographical heart of Brazil, and the 5,000-seat arena was packed well beyond capacity for the spectacle.

With delegations from as far afield as Ethiopia and New Zealand and two dozen indigenous peoples from across Brazil, the games produced nine frenetic days of competition in traditional sports, dancing, singing, commercial and cultural exchange and a dose of politics.

Despite language barriers, tips were traded, stories swapped and traditional accoutrements traded.

Everyone posed for endless selfies with everyone else.

“This is an eye-opener for us,” said Felicia Chischilly, a Navajo from New Mexico who was among 19 delegates from the United States. “It’s a pow wow in the true sense of the word — a gathering of nations.”

Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff was notably absent from the closing ceremony after being booed at the Oct. 21 opening spectacle by demonstrators angry over a land demarcation proposal they say would be catastrophic for Brazilian natives’ traditional ways of life.

The plan being pushed in congress would give the power to demarcate indigenous lands to the legislative branch, which dominated by the powerful agribusiness lobby.

The proposal cast a pall over the games — particularly after it was approved by a congressional commission in the middle of the event. Demonstrators responded by bursting into the arena during the 100-meter dash Wednesday night, forcing a premature end to the evening’s activities.

After that, organizers dramatically beefed up security, which staved off more protests but failed to quell the wellspring of criticism.

Participants complained that chronically chaotic organization hampered the event, and some critics contended the \$14 million that the federal government poured into the games would have been better spent on health and education for Brazil’s beleaguered indigenous peoples.

Antonio Apinaje, a leader of the Apinaje people, dismissed the games as a circus.

“We see this whole thing as a tool to pull the wool over our eyes,” said Apinaje, who declined to take part despite living in the host state of Tocantins.

Billed as a sort of indigenous Olympics, the games featured sports that tend to form part native peoples’ traditions, from goggle-less river swimming to log races.

Saturday saw the finals in canoeing, spear throwing and dramatic archery events.

An archer from the diminutive Aeta people of the Philippines opened Saturday’s archery competition, but it was a towering Mongolian in velvet robe, leather quiver hanging jauntily from his hip, that really caught the crowd’s eye.

Egged on by the grimacing Maori, performing their fierce haka, indigenous supporters flooded the arena during the final moments of a titanic battle in the women’s tug-of war between the local Gaviao people and the Maori, who ultimately prevailed.

Sheridan Ashby, who was on the winning team, said, “We were pulling for all our community, and they were pulling for us.”

The day’s most arresting sporting moment came with a demonstration of a traditional Mexican game, a high-stakes variation on field hockey played with a giant flaming puck.

The crowd was largely dominated by Brazilian indigenous people draped in seed necklaces and punctuated by lush feather headdresses. The Finnish delegates from the reindeer-herding Sami people stood out with their fair hair and blue eyes, while a Filipino beefcake in loincloth was the undisputed favorite among women of many ethnicities. The games’ sole Russian delegate continued to draw stares for bravely defying the tropical heat in a fur-and-rhinestone cat suit.

The next edition of the games will be held in Canada in 2017.

**Direct Link:** [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the\\_americas/tumultuous-world-indigenous-games-wraps-up-in-brazil/2015/10/31/fe4cf772-8038-11e5-bfb6-65300a5ff562\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the_americas/tumultuous-world-indigenous-games-wraps-up-in-brazil/2015/10/31/fe4cf772-8038-11e5-bfb6-65300a5ff562_story.html)

## **Native Americans praise Missoula's shift to Indigenous People's Day**

[MARTIN KIDSTON martin.kidston@missoulain.com](mailto:martin.kidston@missoulain.com)

Updated Oct 30, 2015

Kevin Kicking Woman stepped to the microphone at City Hall this week and commenced to sing a song in his native language. Music is a bridge to heaven, he said, and he urged members of the Missoula City Council to consider his culture’s history.

“We’ve got to embrace our past,” Kicking Woman said. “History has to be told right, so our kids can learn right.”

The City Council’s Committee of the Whole agreed and unanimously passed a resolution naming the second Monday in October – currently observed as Columbus Day – as Indigenous People’s Day.

If adopted by the full council next week, Missoula would join a growing number of U.S. cities and states in recognizing that Native Americans occupied North America long before Christopher Columbus landed in 1492.

Ward 4 council member Patrick Weasel Head – the only Native American on the City Council – said Eurocentric history has long credited Columbus with “discovering” the Americas.

But Native Americans have never given Columbus credence. Weasel Head said history must consider and value the peoples who inhabited the continent long before Columbus arrived.

“The impetus behind it is to acknowledge there were peoples here way before Columbus,” said Weasel Head. “We need to acknowledge our culture, our language and who we are, and for Missoula – we’re built on Salish land. If we don’t acknowledge that on Indigenous Day, then when do we acknowledge it?”

Weasel Head said Native Americans suffer historical trauma over the loss of their land, their language and culture – losses they trace to the arrival of Columbus and the wave of European settlement that followed over the next four centuries.

While recognizing the date as Indigenous People's Day won't alone heal that trauma, Weasel Head said, it will prompt some to consider those who came before Columbus. He brought the resolution forward with council members Marilyn Marler and Mike O'Herron.

“Finally, Missoula is considering this change,” said supporter Roberta Crane. “It’s way past time and for such an open-minded community. It was embarrassing that Missoula still celebrated Columbus Day.”

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**In 2002, Venezuela renamed** the holiday Day of Indigenous Resistance. In South Dakota, it’s now Native American Day. Hawaii calls it Discoverers' Day, and Seattle passed a similar resolution this month, also naming it Indigenous People’s Day.

Efforts to rename the holiday have been a long time coming, according to Rosalyn LaPier, who co-authored “City Indian” with David Beck, detailing the swell of Indian activism that took place in Chicago between 1893 and 1934.

“There was a great amount of Native activism in the city of Chicago that started in 1893 after the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Columbus landing in this hemisphere,” said LaPier. “Chicago was celebrating the World’s Columbian Exposition, and Native people protested the celebration of Columbus at that time.”

Columbus Day was not yet a day of national celebration, LaPier said. But despite the protest of Native Americans and efforts by activist Simon Pokagon – a member of the Potawatomi Tribe and author of the 1893 manual “Red Man’s Rebuke” – it went on to become a federal holiday in 1937.

“When your constituents ask why Indians are bringing this up now – why this is something that’s so new – well, it’s not something new,” LaPier said. “Native people have been protesting this celebration and particular day for a very long time.”

Mayor John Engen also joined the resolution, saying the change was long overdue.

Those employed in local government get Columbus Day off. They will continue to do so, though the city will recognize the date moving forward as Indigenous People's Day.

"I want to be clear that recognizing the second Monday in October each year as Indigenous People's Day is not by any means trying to take away a date the unions have bargained for to take off," said Marler. "We're not trying to take away a negotiated thing."

**Direct Link:** [http://missoulian.com/news/local/native-americans-praise-missoula-s-shift-to-indigenous-people-s/article\\_dc8aff63-b390-53e4-ae2c-60d51d3dfc0d.html](http://missoulian.com/news/local/native-americans-praise-missoula-s-shift-to-indigenous-people-s/article_dc8aff63-b390-53e4-ae2c-60d51d3dfc0d.html)

## **Indigenous From Amazon See Brazil Nut as Forest's Future**

By jenny barchfield, associated press

PALMAS, Brazil — Oct 31, 2015, 1:54 AM ET

The creation story of the Cinta Larga people holds that they were born out of the fruit of the [Brazil](#) nut tree.

Now they are betting that the mighty tree could be the key to their very future in the [Amazon](#) rain forest.

A project sponsored by international donors has helped the Cinta Larga and other indigenous people from Brazil's Mato Grosso state monetize the towering centenary trees by turning their nuts, which normally plummet to the forest floor and rot, into cash.

Since it started last year, the Sentinels of the Forest program has boosted the tribes' incomes 50 percent, said Daeit Akata Kaban, leader of the Cinta Larga. That's given the group of about 1,700 people renewed incentive to protect their roughly 80,000 hectares (2 million acres) of ancestral forest from loggers, ranchers and poachers pressing in on all sides.

"It has completely changed our lives," Kaban said at the group's stand at the World Indigenous Games, a celebration of cultures from around the world wrapping up this weekend in Palmas.

The project was the brainchild of Paulo Cesar Nunes, an agronomist whose family moved from Sao Paulo to the forest state of Rondonia on Brazil's western frontier to harvest Brazil nuts. Growing up, Nunes witnessed the catastrophic results of a government

project to resettle landless farmers in Rondonia, which led to nearly wholesale clear-cutting in the state.

Nunes believes the Brazil nut can help prevent a similar fate for neighboring Mato Grosso, which is in the sights of big agricultural interests as a frontier for soy, cotton, corn and cattle.

Securing \$1.25 million from the Fundo Amazonas, a fund of international donors that is administered by the Brazilian government's national development bank, he set up a Brazil nut cooperative in Jurueña, a town roughly halfway between the Cinta Larga's reserve and another where the Cayabi, Apiaka and Munduruku peoples live.

Brazil nut trees dot the region, and the melon-sized shells containing the nuts naturally tumble to the forest floor during the rainy season, meaning harvesters just have to pick up the shells. But the oily nuts' susceptibility to fungus, bacteria and insects make getting them to market before they rot tricky.

Sentinels of the Forest built 18 storage facilities throughout the forest to keep the nuts fresh and dry while awaiting processing.

The project has also invested in industrial drying machines that allow them not only to sell the nuts whole but also to extract the oil, which is used for cooking and also as an ingredient in shampoos, face creams and lotions. Brazilian cosmetics firm Natura buys oil from the group.

The dried meal left over from the extraction process is used to make cookies, noodles and granola bars that the federal government distributes to 40,000 local residents through its "Zero Hunger" social program.

"It really gives our harvesters a sense of pride to see their children and friends and neighbors consuming the product they picked with their own hands," said Nunes. "Not only do we contribute to the food security of the region, but our harvesters are also doing a kind of policing of the forest, checking for invaders as they're out on their rounds."

Some 350 people, including tribe members and local family farmers, work on the project, which in its first year generated nearly \$100,000. The initial harvest was 130 tons, but ambitions for the future are big: The warehouses have capacity to stock 1,000 tons — and with 875,000 hectares between the two indigenous reservations, there are plenty more nuts to be collected.

"They've told us, 'Too bad this project didn't exist 20 years ago,'" Nunes said. "If it had, lots more forest would still be standing today."

**Direct Link:** <http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/indigenous-amazon-brazil-nut-forests-future-34871363>

# Day of the Dead still a highly indigenous observance

## Celebrations rooted in groups of Mesoamerica

By [Elaine Ayala](#)

November 1, 2015 Updated: November 1, 2015 10:23pm

Centro Cultural Aztlán, one of the city's oldest Chicano arts organizations, will cap off Día de los Muertos tonight with its annual exhibition of large-scale altars.

As they have for many years, Urban-15 dancers will fill the Deco District gallery with movement and sound. Incense will waft over celebrators as beautifully dressed *catrinas* (elegant skeletons) remind participants of the eventuality of death, even as they poke fun at it for bypassing them for another year.

By many accounts, Centro Cultural's 38th annual show is the city's longest-running Muertos celebration, but as with the city's multiplying events, they're all still relative newcomers to rituals owed entirely to the indigenous people of Mesoamerica, scholars say.

Consciously or unconsciously, San Antonio and other U.S. cities and even some Mexican ones are reclaiming Day of the Dead, said area historians, anthropologists and other scholars, and there's still much to learn from rituals more reverent, spiritual and symbolic than ours.

Historian Teresa Van Hoy of St. Mary's University said that in western and southern Mexican states such as Michoacán and Oaxaca, for example, indigenous people and mestizos build altars that acknowledge three "realms (or levels) of existence": the earth and underworld (think marigolds); human existence (portraits of the beloved); and the divine (Our Lady of Guadalupe).

Van Hoy said beverages such as tequila and mezcal are placed on altars because the indigenous believed that using them provided "portals" to the deceased and erased "the thin barriers between the realms."

That so many traditions unfold at night offers another lesson. The fall of darkness is "understood to be when the veil between worlds are at their best, at their thinnest," Van Hoy said.

This isn't just mysticism: Ancient people actually lived with the dead. Throughout the world, they buried their loved ones in their homes, interacting with ancestors "on a regular basis," said Trinity University anthropologist Jennifer Mathews.



That may be why Mexicans are more at ease with the subject and more comfortable holding court in cemeteries. Mathews said that when she first started traveling there, she was shocked “to see all these people go on for days with mariachis at cemeteries.”

She was dealing with the loss of her grandmother on one visit and found solace in the rituals. She laughs that now “all these white ladies” in her family set up Day of the Dead altars.

Rosana Blanco-Cano, associate professor of Spanish at Trinity, said it’s no accident that U.S. cities such as San Antonio have adopted such practices. San Antonio has transnational connections to states such as Michoacán.

While many Muertos events are loud and celebratory — as they are in larger Mexican cities — Blanco-Cano said indigenous areas observe the holiday solemnly, some in complete silence.

In some villages, “people are not allowed to speak when you come into the town,” Blanco-Cano said. Cemetery visits are instead meditative. “I don’t want to use the word ‘magic.’ But it takes you to a different place, where you can feel those connections.”

San Antonio historian Ward Albro, author of a book on the Day of the Dead in Oaxaca, said indigenous observances were untethered to mainstream religion and instead grounded in the season. The November commemorations on All Saints and All Souls Days are off by at least a month from the end of harvest time, said Albro, a professor emeritus from Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

Whether they received a good or a bad harvest, indigenous people built altars showing gratitude to *antepasados*, or ancestors, or asking for help in the next season. They were driven by “a certain sense of obligation,” Albro said.

In San Antonio, an indigenous group — descendants of American Indians who built the Spanish colonial missions — still commemorates the dead at harvest time before the fall equinox.

On Sept. 21, members of the Tap Pilam Coahuiltecan nation gathered at the Alamo for its annual *llanto* (Spanish for cry), said spokesman Ramon Vasquez, describing it as a solemn tribute to “fallen warriors.” It’s called Semana de Recuerdos, or week of memories.

For 25 years, they’ve gathered at sunrise to read the names of the American Indians buried there since the 1700s, he said. It’s followed by song.

They’re not alone. It’s a commemoration of the dead that’s practiced at many missions throughout the Southwest, Vasquez said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/Day-of-the-Dead-still-a-highly-indigenous-6604036.php>

## **Tips to avoid fake Native American jewelry**

### **3 arrested in October bust**

Published 8:38 AM MST Nov 02, 2015

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. —After federal authorities charged three people with selling fake Native American jewelry across New Mexico, Action 7 News asked reputable vendors how to spot fake jewelry.

Warpath Traders is one of many Albuquerque shops that feature authentic Native American jewelry. The store gets its products directly from artists.

If the owners aren't sure if an item is authentic, they'll mark those items as "southwestern style."

"There's a place for everything, but to misrepresent anything isn't good business or good business practice, and it hurts the Native American industry when people represent non-Native American goods," Steve White said.

White has 25 years of experience with jewelry. He said he's been fooled a few times and it's getting harder to spot the fakes.

"The quality that they're making some of the imitation Native American-looking jewelry has gotten so good that even people who are in the know don't know all the time," he said.

White said there's no tried and true way to spot fakes, but buying from a reputable dealer is a good start.

"Just do your research. See what kind of guarantees they'll give you on what they're selling, price check, do your due diligence, and you'll be OK," he said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.koat.com/news/tips-to-avoid-fake-native-american-jewelry/36202870>

# Facebook reconsiders 'real name' policy after pushback from trans community, Native Americans

By [Andrew Blake](#) - The Washington Times - Monday, November 2, 2015

Facebook is preparing to fine-tune its "real name" policy after facing opposition from Native Americans, drag performers and members of the trans community among others, who had taken aim at the social networking site's rules on how users can identify themselves online.

Alex Schultz, Facebook's vice president of growth, [wrote](#) in an open letter published on Friday that the website will begin testing and implementing new features in the coming months intended to address concerns raised by individuals upset with rules that have created hardships for users who don't register with their "authentic names."

Facebook has argued that requiring users to prove their identity has helped curb instances of online harassment and has long maintained rules requiring users with non-traditional names to prove their identity with official documentation.

In July, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg said: "We know people are much less likely to try to act abusively towards other members of our community when they're using their real names."

Now, Mr. Schultz said in his letter, the website is committed now to striking a balance "that minimizes bullying but maximizes the potential for people to be their authentic selves on Facebook."

"We are working on several improvements, with two goals in mind: First, we want to reduce the number of people who are asked to verify their name on Facebook, when they are already using the name people know them by. Second, we want to make it easier for people to confirm their name if necessary," he wrote.

"We are deeply invested in making this better. I've seen first-hand how people — including LGBT people — can be bullied online by people using fake or impersonating accounts," Mr. Schultz said. "We also understand the challenges for many transgender people when it comes to formally changing one's name. That's why we're making changes now and in the future, and will continue to engage with you and all who are committed to looking after the most vulnerable people using our product."

Facebook's about face was announced less than a month after a coalition of international groups composed of the American Civil Liberties Union and the Electronic Frontier Foundation, among others, [accused](#) the social networking site of maintaining "a system that disregards the circumstances of users in countries with low levels of Internet

penetration, exposes its users to danger, disrespects the identities of its users and curtails free speech."

According to the organizations, Facebook's policies up until now have infringed on transgender people "whose legal names don't accord with their gender identify," individuals who adopt pseudonyms "in order to protect themselves from physical violence" and others who have fallen short of Facebook's "arbitrary standards of 'real names,' " including Native Americans.

In a letter dated Oct. 5, the groups urged Facebook to "provide equal treatment and protection for all who use and depend on Facebook as a central platform for online expression and communication."

Mr. Schultz responded: "Historically, when people were prompted to confirm their Facebook profile name, there was no opportunity to give additional details or context on their unique situation. We now plan to test a new process that will let people provide more information about their circumstances. This should help our Community Operations team better understand the situation. It will also help us better understand the reasons why people can't currently confirm their name, informing potential changes we make in the future."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/nov/2/facebook-reconsiders-real-name-policy-after-pushba/print/>

## Democrats shouldn't praise Jackson

Albert Bender 10:01 a.m. CST November 2, 2015



Seventh president signed the Indian Removal Act, which led to many being forcibly removed and killed.

Re: "Democrats remain party of the people," by Mary Mancini, Oct. 22.

Some things you just don't see coming. That was my reaction to the column by Mary Mancini, chairwoman of the Tennessee Democratic Party, praising that mass murderer, Andrew Jackson.

The column was posted in connection with the party's annual Jackson Day Dinner.

As I have known Mancini as a voice of liberalism and reason in this community, I shall not engage in personal invective. I will just address the position of the state Democratic Party as manifested by Mancini.

The column states "Jackson was elected because he captured the imagination of the American people."

He captured the imagination of racist white people who imagined an America without Indians, an America where there was no place for Native Americans.

As for Jackson being elected "because he believed that the White House was the people's house," again this was a residence (I have always had a problem with the term White House) in which Native Americans were not welcome.

The Democrats were not the "party of the people" then and are still trying to be the "party of the people" now and are immeasurably helped by the Republicans being so blatantly the "party of the rich."

But back to Jackson. He is reviled by American Indians across the country.

Jackson carried out the most murderous removal campaign against Native Americans — Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws and Seminoles — in U.S. history. He was directly responsible for the hideous, agonizing deaths of tens of thousands of Native Americans, beginning with the Creek War of 1813-14.

Jackson was accountable for the deaths of thousands of Muscogee Creek people in that conflict. He envisioned an America without Indians. Jackson led armies that conducted a war of extermination against noncombatants — women, children, the elderly.

According to present-day Creek sources, hundreds of Creek women and children were also sold into slavery. They were starved and many murdered in captivity.

Many of the women were also raped. Creek children, particularly little boys, were sold for \$20 each as "pets."

Orphaned children were taken off the battlefields from the bodies of their dead mothers as "trophies." Three such children were taken by Jackson himself, including the tragic Lincoya.

Jackson signed the Indian Removal Bill of May 30, 1830, and militarily enforced fraudulent treaties that brought further death to thousands of Native American men, women, children and elderly. Of the Cherokee “Trail of Tears,” it is said that no one younger than 6 or older than 60 survived the hideous march of death.

Much of the Cherokee past and future perished on the trail of genocide that killed two generations.

Yet the Tennessee Democratic Party wants to praise this racist monster — this racist devil incarnate — this early-day American Hitler whose deadly legacy for American Indians remains extant to this very day.

But one thing the Tennessee Democratic Party can count on at its next Jackson Day Dinner is an angry anti-Jackson demonstration by incensed Native Americans. That’s a promise!

*Albert Bender is a Native American historian, author and community activist. Email him at [albertbender07@yahoo.com](mailto:albertbender07@yahoo.com).*

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.tennessean.com/story/opinion/contributors/2015/11/02/democrats-shouldnt-praise-jackson/75009578/>

## **Inside A Photographer's Mission To Capture The Human Face Of Climate Change**

**"I know a hunter that's killed all of his dogs because he doesn't see a point in living a traditional way of life anymore."**

[Alexandra Ma](#) Editorial Fellow, The Huffington Post

Posted: 11/02/2015 03:40 PM EST | Edited: 11/03/2015 04:23 PM EST

How do you photograph climate change?

That was the question that Slovenian photographer Ciril Jazbec faced as he embarked on several journeys to the town of Uummannaq, Greenland, on a personal mission to capture the [human face](#) of climate change.

His photos, shot over four trips from March 2013 to March 2015, [document melting glaciers](#) and fjords through the eyes of the Inuit, a group of indigenous peoples living in the Arctic region.

The WorldPost spoke with Jazbec about his experience photographing climate change, living with Greenland's Inuit community and his thoughts on the future of the Inuit way of life. Some of his images are [displayed](#) in the [November 2015 issue](#) of National Geographic magazine.



Ciril Jazbec/National Geographic Slovenian photographer Ciril Jazbec traveled to Uummannaq Fjord, Greenland, to photograph the human face of climate change.

### **What inspired you to "illustrate" climate change?**

It all started when I was studying documentary photography in London and I decided to travel to Kiribati [a Pacific island republic facing [rising sea levels](#)] to work on climate change for my Master's final project. I spent about a month there, and realized that it's incredibly difficult to photograph climate change. I learned that the best way to do it is through personal stories and to spend enough time following someone and that person's life in different seasons.

I was born in a small village in Slovenia and come from a small community, living close to nature and spending lots of time in the woods. The idea that people have to leave their home or village or town because of climate change, that life changes so much and so quickly, really inspired me to look into it more and spend time in these communities.

Then I was looking at a world map and thinking where else would be interesting to go. I applied for another grant and went to Greenland.





"Every time I travel to Greenland, there's magic," Jazbec said. "It's like you're on another planet."

**Tell me about your journey to Greenland and what it was like spending time with Inuit families.**

Every time I travel to Greenland, there's magic. The first few hours after you take off, and you fly over Iceland and approach Greenland, and you look at the glaciers and frozen ice fjords, it's like you're on another planet.

I will never forget my first trip, in March 2013. I flew with a helicopter over Uummannaq Fjord during sunrise and I watched hunters with sleds and dogs running around frozen ice fjords and this town with colorful houses. It's magical.

I spent a lot of time with families in settlements, particularly around Uummannaq, which had about 52 to 200 residents. I would stay with the families, usually for a week, and I'd sleep on their sofa so I could wake up in the morning in their living room.

In Greenland, I learned to be patient. I had never been patient in my life before. In Greenland, when you'd try to arrange something with hunters, they would say, "Maybe, maybe, if the weather is good." That really drove me crazy all the time. You can wait there for two weeks and nothing's happening. They're just waiting for the weather.

What's really incredible about National Geographic is that they really give you support and time to work on a story in different seasons. My best work probably came later on, during my second or third trips, because I already had so many great friends there. You establish these connections and that's what people in the north really value and recognize.



"In Greenland, I learned to be patient," Jazbec said. "When you try to arrange something with hunters they would say, 'Maybe, maybe, if the weather is good.'"

### **How has climate change influenced the Inuit's way of life?**

Fishing is the main industry in Greenland. They export halibut to countries like Japan and France. In recent years, the length of the sea ice has become much shorter than it used to be, forcing fishermen to invest in boats and equipment.

The problem with the unpredictable weather and climate change is that sometimes the ice is too thick and they can't use the boats for fishing, while at the same time, the ice sleds or snow scooters sometimes fall through thin ice.

One time, I was on a sled with a hunter and his 12 dogs for a couple of hours and all of a sudden, one of the dogs started to swim. Luckily, the hunter stopped at the right time, pushed the sled back and the dog somehow climbed out of the water.

Greenlanders love dogs. Every man used to have 30, 50 dogs. It's about the pride, it's about tradition. But now, the number of dogs is quickly decreasing, also due to climate change. There is no point in having dogs and feeding them all year round, if you can only use them for two or three months.



Many Greenlanders have had to kill their prized dogs because they cannot afford to maintain them throughout the year.

Climate change also makes it even harder to get food for a family's survival. The melting of the glaciers adds a layer of fresh water in the sea. Hunters would usually shoot a seal from a boat and that seal would float near the surface. Because of the melting of glaciers, the seal now often sinks, making it harder to bring the animal aboard. It's very hard work to be a fisherman or hunter. Sometimes they work all night, trying to get food.

Between 2013 and 2015, some of the Inuit have completely changed their lives. Some moved away, abandoning their houses. I know a hunter that's killed all of his dogs because he doesn't see a point in living a traditional way of life anymore.



The melting of the glaciers has also made it harder for hunters and fishermen to hunt for food. "Sometimes they work all night, trying to get food," Jazbec said.

### **What does the future look like for the Inuits?**

It's very hard to say. I'm sure that some settlements will preserve but the number of settlements will probably decrease. Their future also depends on the governments of Greenland and Denmark. The settlements need support in terms of social needs and infrastructure connectivity.



Many people have abandoned old Inuit ways of life for new opportunities in larger towns. "Between 2013 and 2015, some of the Inuit have completely changed their lives," Jazbec said. "Some moved away, abandoning their houses."

**Direct Link:** [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/ciril-jazbec-climate-change-photos\\_5633c926e4b06317991262f1](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/ciril-jazbec-climate-change-photos_5633c926e4b06317991262f1)

## The Wrongs We Are Doing Native American Children

By [Clint Bolick](#) 11/2/15 at 3:48 PM



The Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 was passed to halt the widespread practice of separating Indian children from their biological families, intended to protect the best interests of Indian children and the stability of Indian tribes. Instead, the ICWA elevated the interests of tribes above those of individual children, and it weakened the protections of children that state laws provide, the author writes. Oswaldo Rivas/Reuters



*This article was first published on the [Defining Ideas](#) blog of the [Hoover Institution](#).*

The obituary of Laurynn Whiteshield depicts her as a happy and playful little girl. And for most of her short life, she was.

From the age of nine months, she lived with her twin sister Michaela in a loving foster family that wanted to adopt her. When the girls were just shy of three, the county acted to make them available for adoption.

But a court ordered that the girls be taken from their foster home and placed with their grandfather and his wife, who had been arrested half a dozen times for abuse, neglect, endangerment and abandonment of her own children.

Thirty-seven days after the transfer took place, Laurynn was dead. The grandfather's wife admitted to pushing both down an embankment, explaining that she "was getting depressed about having kids all the time." Although her sister survived, Laurynn suffered blunt force trauma to her head.

The forced transfer from a safe, loving foster family to a home that posed great and obvious danger to the girls did not happen in a third-world country but in the United States. It did not happen 40 or 60 years ago but in 2013. And it did not happen because the court ignored the law but because it followed it.

Had any of the child custody laws of the 50 states been applied, in all likelihood Laurynn would be alive today. That is because state laws require consideration of the "best interests of the child" in determining termination of parental rights, foster placements and adoptions.

That bedrock rule protects all American children—except children of Native American ancestry, like Laurynn.

Although she had never lived on a reservation, because of Laurynn's ancestry, she was made subject to the Indian tribe's jurisdiction, which determined it was better to "reunify" her with a grandfather with whom she had never lived instead of the non-Indian foster family who had raised her from infancy and wanted to adopt her. All because of different rules that apply solely to children of Indian ancestry.

Even more bizarre is that the separate and unequal treatment of children with Indian blood is the result of a federal law that was enacted in their name: the [Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978](#) (ICWA). ICWA was passed to halt the widespread practice prior to 1978 of separating Indian children from their biological families based on the flawed assumption that poverty and cultural differences on Indian reservations equated with child abuse.

ICWA was intended to protect the best interests of Indian children and the stability of Indian tribes by setting minimum federal standards for termination of parental rights, foster care and adoptions.

Unfortunately, ICWA elevated the interests of tribes above those of individual children, and it weakened the protections of children that state laws provide. For instance, to terminate parental rights, it must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt that leaving the child in the home is likely to result in “serious emotional or physical damage”—the same standard applied in criminal cases.

The result is that many Indian children are left in abusive homes and suffer grievous physical and emotional harm, even when there are eager families who would like to provide them with safe and loving homes.

Nor does ICWA apply only to Native American children living on Indian reservations. It applies to children who have only a smidgeon of Native American blood, and even to children who have never set foot on an Indian reservation. That is because ICWA allows the tribes to determine which children are eligible for membership and therefore are subject to the tribe’s jurisdiction. That determination usually is made on the basis of the degree of Indian ancestry as determined by the tribe.

In that sense ICWA is an historical anachronism. More than a century ago, [Adolph Plessy](#) was consigned by law to a separate “colored” streetcar because he was one-eighth black. Today, children with only a small percentage of Indian blood and few if any ties to a reservation are involuntarily made subject to tribal jurisdiction and deprived of their full rights of American citizenship.

Surely that is not what the framers of ICWA had in mind when they sought to minimize interference with Indian tribes. The pendulum has swung dramatically from protecting legitimate tribal sovereignty in favor of giving them power over the lives of children with only remote tribal connections.

Once jurisdiction over a child custody proceeding is transferred to a tribal court, the rules that ordinarily protect children no longer apply. Recent Bureau of Indian Affairs guidelines implementing ICWA have completely eliminated the “best interests of the child” standard, presuming that placement in an Indian home is in the child’s best interests.

As a result, children with Indian blood often are taken from foster homes where they have resided since birth and placed with Indian families with whom they have no ties whatsoever. Frequently, the search for adoptive Indian families goes on for years, disrupting the lives of children, depriving them of stability and permanency and often inflicting severe emotional harm.

The separate and unequal legal regime applicable to children with Indian blood is especially bizarre given the fight that took place over inter-racial adoptions two decades ago.

Though it may be difficult to believe, as late as the 1990s, many states had laws or policies making it difficult for non-white families to adopt black children. The National Association of Black Social Workers assailed inter-racial adoptions as “cultural genocide.”

Because there was a disproportionately large number of black children needing adoption and a disproportionately small number of black families able to adopt them, the result of the rules was that many black children languished in foster care despite the availability of loving adoptive homes.

In the 1990s, I represented Scott and Lou Ann Mullen, Texans whose family of natural, foster and adopted children resembled a mini-United Nations. An infant named Matthew came into their foster care, infected with syphilis and addicted to crack cocaine from the womb.

The Mullens nursed Matthew to health and fell in love with him. They decided to adopt him and his older brother Joseph. But state officials told the Mullens they could not adopt them because the boys were black and Scott (who is white) and Lou Ann (who is Native American) were not.

The case gained national attention, and a coalition of liberals and conservatives mobilized to enact federal legislation forbidding racial discrimination in adoptions. There are now two diametrically opposed federal laws concerning adoption placements, one forbidding racial discrimination, the other requiring it—but only for children with Native American blood.

Under ICWA, adoptions by reservation families are preferred even if the child has no blood or other contact with the families, and even if it means separating the children from foster families with whom they have lived since birth. The law is often used to override the wishes of Indian parents putting their children up for adoption. And several states have laws that are even more stringent than ICWA in their tribal preferences.

A case currently pending before the Washington Supreme Court underscores such laws’ perverse (and in this case surely unintended) consequences.

A 7-old girl was born to a mother who is Native American and a father who is not. Custody was awarded to the mom and the father’s parental rights were terminated. Thereafter the mother married a man who is not Native American, and who wants to become the girl’s legal dad.



Ordinarily, such an adoption would be routine. But not under ICWA, which was invoked by the birth dad—who is not even Native American—to prevent the adoption on the grounds that “active efforts” were not made to preserve an Indian family.

Two years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court considered a case involving ICWA. The opening words of the [Baby Veronica decision](#) capture the law’s perversity: “This case is about a little girl (Baby Girl) who is classified as an Indian because she is 1.2 percent (3/256) Cherokee. Because Baby Girl is classified in this way, the South Carolina Supreme Court held that certain provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 required her to be taken, at the age of 27 months, from the only parents she had ever known and handed over to her biological father, who had attempted to relinquish his parental rights and who had no prior contact with the child.”

By a 5-4 vote, the Court construed ICWA to avoid such a harsh result in that case. But in so doing it left the law intact, although a majority of justices expressed concerns about the law’s constitutionality.

So long as the court fails to confront the constitutionality of ICWA, it will continue to relegate children with Indian blood to second-class status.

To settle the issue, the [Goldwater Institute](#) on July 7 filed a proposed class-action lawsuit in federal district court in Arizona challenging the constitutionality of ICWA and the harsh Bureau of Indian Affairs guidelines implementing it. We represent children with Indian blood living in foster homes outside of Indian reservations and the foster families who likely would be allowed to adopt them were it not for the ICWA rules and preferences.

We raise several constitutional claims:

— *Equal protection*. All children and prospective adoptive families for adoption should be treated equally without regard to their race.

— *Due process*. Children should have their best interests taken into account in the contexts of termination of parental rights, foster placements, and adoptions.

— *Federalism*. Federal law cannot displace state jurisdiction regarding placements of non-reservation children.

— *Freedom of association*. Children cannot be forced to become members of Indian tribes and made subject to their jurisdiction.

By pursuing a class action lawsuit, we hope to avoid the possibility that our case will be decided on narrow factual grounds, and instead secure a precedent that invalidates ICWA and the regime of subjecting children to adverse treatment because of the racial quantum of their blood.

That cannot happen quickly enough. So long as ICWA stands, countless children will be left in abusive homes and prevented from or delayed in becoming part of a permanent loving homes. The sad fate that Laurynn Whiteshield suffered was eminently preventable and should never be repeated.

*[Clint Bolick](#) is a research fellow at the [Hoover Institution](#) and also serves as the director of the [Goldwater Institute Center for Constitutional Litigation](#) in Phoenix.*

**Direct Link:** <http://www.newsweek.com/wrongs-we-are-doing-native-american-children-389771>

## 11 Native American Artists Whose Work Redefines What It Means to Be American

By [Kinsey Lane Sullivan](#) November 03, 2015

The United States is often described as a melting pot, a mosaic of individual voices. When it comes to the complex relationship between Native and U.S. history and contemporary culture, however, that doesn't feel accurate. It seems like Native peoples were and continue to be seen as a homogenous group rather than a diverse collection of individuals and communities.

Luckily, a different picture is beginning to emerge. Not only are Native issues [saturating the media](#), individual Native voices are being heard more loudly. Some of the loudest and loveliest voices are those of artists.

These 11 artists in particular are presenting unique, personal perspectives on what it means to be Native American. In doing so, they are reframing, re-contextualizing and even redefining what it means to be American. Their work explores the complex relationship between the three identities: Native, American and Native American.

### 1. Merritt Johnson

[Johnson](#), who is Mohawk and Blackfoot, is a multidisciplinary artist whose work feels simultaneously familiar and distinct, both approachable and demanding. Her work is full of subtleties, allusions and challenges that invite the viewer into deeper, denser conversations about social camouflage and protection, community and humans' relationship with land.

This can be seen in her work, which often features natural and organic elements, like fur and shells, as well as familiar iconography portrayed in unconventional media. One of the most powerful messages in her art has to do with the complex relationship between U.S. and Native history.

"The idea of America didn't include Onkwehonwe (Indigenous people) or non-white/non-male people until relatively recently," Johnson told *Mic*. "My work explores camouflage in cultural terms, how we identify, protect and hide ourselves; and how we are identified, hidden and threatened by others ... the fear of predation exists for all animals, [and] people are a kind of animal."

"I work from my perspective as mixed, descending from Onkwehonwe and settlers, so I am exploring my experience and learning about where I come from as well."

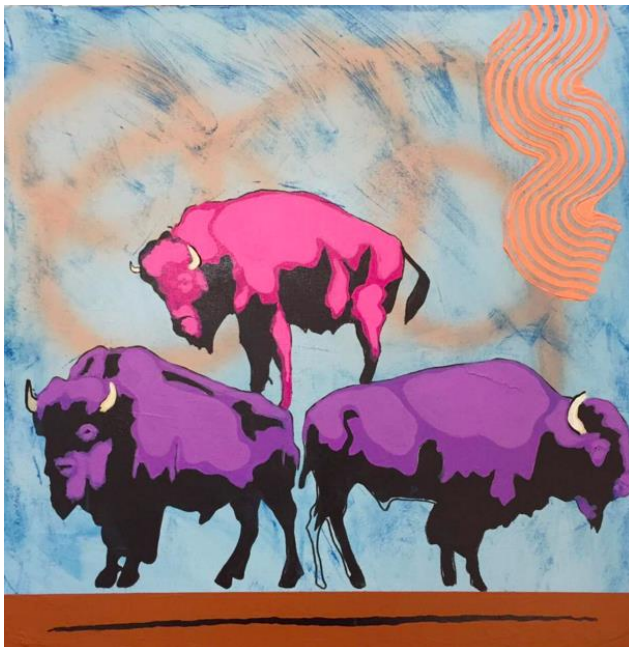
## 2. Nicholas Galanin

[Galanin](#), who is [Tlingit](#) and [Aleut](#), celebrates his contemporary art education with his awareness of traditional (also known as customary) practices in his multimedia art and music. He holds his individuality and his culture high, developing a singular, passionate, autonomous voice.

"Nothing about what I do is a new perspective on Americanness," Galanin told *Mic* about how his work reflected his perspective on what it means to be American. His work, he said, "comes from a place that has known 'America' before 'America' decided to call this land 'America.'"

In unique ways, his art rejects the so-called "settler" narrative. "To exist and offer works that speak from our own indigenous perspective is revolutionary when the institution is created to teach this perspective as a cliff note. Sovereign Indigenous creativity is power," Galanin said.

## 3. Frank Buffalo Hyde



Food PyramidSource: [Frank Buffalo Hyde/Facebook](#)

[Hyde](#), who is [Onondaga](#) and [Nez Perce](#), is a multimedia painter and visual artist whose work is as multidimensional as the concepts he explores. Hyde's work simultaneously acknowledges and rejects the stereotypes that are often associated with so-called "Indian artists."

Hyde's work has echoes of street art as well as graphic design, fantastic colors and an almost-playful surrealism. However, his perspective on his experience as a Native in America, or a Native artist, isn't playful or surreal at all.

"I'm still holding up a mirror to popular society but I'm also not where I want to be yet — I have my eye on bigger venues and bigger conversations nationally," Hyde told the [Santa Fe Reporter](#). "By sort of being persistent, I've earned a place in the contemporary Native art scene, whatever that is or wherever it exists outside of Santa Fe. It's one thing to be invited to the dinner, but it's another thing to hold your place at the table."

#### 4. Votan Henriquez



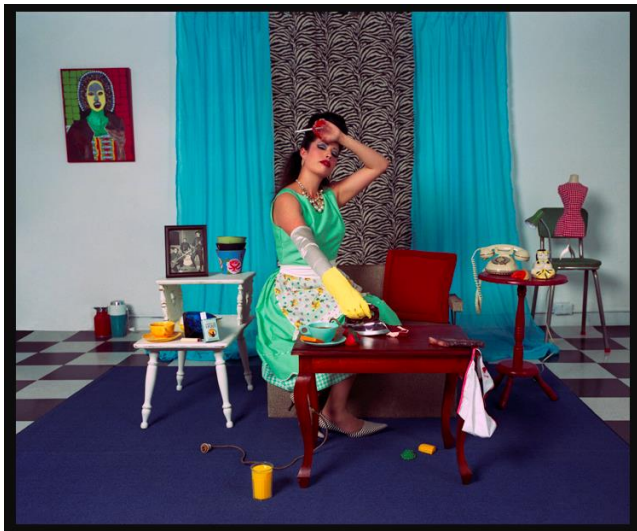
Henriquez, who is [Maya](#) and [Nahua](#), has a distinctive visual voice expressed primarily on city streets. As a student of street art and graffiti culture, his unique perspective on Native

and mainstream U.S. creative expression is especially compelling. Graffiti is [deeply tied](#) to New York City's urban environment, especially so in the '70s.

This muralist, street artist and clothing designer works primarily in Los Angeles, but his recent project in collaboration with the Minneapolis American Indian Center will be his [largest](#).

Like so many American street artists, Henriquez and his work both reflect the passion and devotion to community. "L.A. is full of art, crime, justice, abuse and many other things like any other city, but this is where we live," he wrote on [Facebook](#). "So make it a beautiful place!"

## 5. Wendy Red Star



[Red Star](#), [Apsáalooke](#) or Crow, creates photographs and mixed-media paintings that incorporate a level of satire, awareness, candor and even feminism that brings to mind [Nan Goldin](#)'s unique portraiture, [Cindy Sherman](#)'s repeated self-transformations and even [Andy Warhol](#)'s commercial satire.

This questioning, reframing and even satirization of identity is essential to her work. Her commentary on Native rights and the perception that Native peoples are seen as a "people of the past," especially with progress.

"I use humor and wit as a way to break down the complexities of Native and U.S. history," Red Star told *Mic*. "I am able to make sense and plunge into the heart of the matter without feeling defeated before I even get a chance to process or experience. This approach also allows my viewers a gateway to approach some of the difficult subjects I want to discuss through my work."

Her work is beguiling, but don't be lulled by how attractive it is — it's deeply developed and deeply empathetic.



"The Native experience is a human experience in which everyone can relate. It is not just my history but your history, and together it is our history," she said.

## 6. Will Wilson



William Wilson, Citizen of the Navajo Nation, Trans-Customary Diné ArtistSource: [Will Wilson](#)

[Wilson](#), a [Diné](#) photographer who lived in the Navajo Nation, deals with a complicated issue: how cultural identity can be imposed rather than developed, defined through the lens of another.

Like Red Star, Wilson is also interested in how Native peoples are seen as a people of the past.

One of his most renowned projects, the [Critical Indigenous Photographic Exchange](#), questions and expands upon the image of Native and Indigenous people popularized by photographer [Edward Curtis](#). Wilson notes that Curtis' images are part of what makes Native people "frozen in time," he said in his artist's statement, which was adapted with permission for *Mic*.

Wilson's photographs "intend to resume the documentary mission of Curtis from the standpoint of a 21st century indigenous, trans-customary, cultural practitioner," according to his artist's statement. "I want to supplant Curtis' Settler gaze and the remarkable body

of ethnographic material he compiled with a contemporary vision of Native North America ... These alone — rather than the old paradigm of assimilation — can form the basis for a reimagined vision of who we are as Native people."

## 7. Duane Slick

[Slick](#), who is Sauk, Fox and Winnebago, works mostly in monochromatic shades and shadows, like the moments before you open your eyes. His paintings, books and prints all share a kind of transience and elusiveness that draw the viewer close but not overwhelmingly close to the stories he tells.

Slick, like Red Star and Wilson, also is interested in this trapped-in-history understanding of Native peoples, in large part due to Curtis' images. These photographs, he told *Mic*, were part of a larger historical tragedy wherein Natives were placed "in a single grand narrative of history and representation." This sense of history, and the way that it influences the present, is central in Slick's work.

Slick said he was inspired by the "laughter of the coyote, the eternal trickster and ultimate survivor, saturated and filled our daily lives."

"His laughter is irreverent, and doesn't acknowledge the scale of the master narrative," Slick said. "It echoed through the lecture halls of histories and it was so powerful and it was so distracting that I forgot my place in linear time, and now I work from an untraceable present."

## 8. George Longfish

[Longfish](#), a retired [Seneca](#) and [Tuscarora](#) painter, worked in primarily modernist and politically charged modes. His artwork is credited for leading the [Native art movement](#) and the emergence of Native contemporary artists. In his works, he questions the way we define our identity, interrogating those complex political, social, historical and psychological underpinnings.

"The more we are able to own our religious, spiritual, and survival information, and even language, the less we can be controlled," Longfish said in an [exhibition statement](#) with [Molly McGlennen](#). "The greatest lesson we can learn is that we can bring our spirituality and warrior information from the past and use it in the present and see that it still works."

## 9. Margaret Jacobs

[Jacobs](#), a [Mohawk](#) recipient of the Harpo Foundation's prestigious [Native American Residency Fellowship](#), is one of the only artists on this list who works almost exclusively in one style: abstract metal sculpture. Her works are emotive and sharp, edged with knowledge and heavy with history — but they're not violent or threatening.



She uses contemporary alloyed materials, including steel and pewter, to question how cultures adapt to the art world, Jacobs told *Mic*. This use of steel is particularly layered with meaning; it references not only strength and resistance, but the weight of culture and the famed [Mohawk Ironworkers](#).

When asked about the way her work reflects the relationship between Natives and the United States, Jacobs said, "There is such a complex relationship between Natives and the U.S. and I think that for survival we have to figure out how to adapt to a contemporary world without losing the essence of culture and meaning. This is one of the major ideas that I am exploring in my work."

## 10. Shonto Begay

[Begay](#), Diné, is one of the most established artists on this list. He paints lyrical, pointilistic works, the dots of which "repeat like the words of a Navajo prayer," as described on his gallery's [website](#).

Begay's work is widely accessible, and in some ways, it's even familiar. It has a gorgeously Impressionistic, even Expressionistic, sensibility. That said, its originality doesn't suffer from this comparison — rather, its beauty is enhanced.

That said, there are some darker historical shadows in his work. In Begay's [biography](#), he has said he survived boarding school because he was able to draw on cultural and spiritual strength, and retreat into his drawings.

"'Arts save lives' has been my mantra ever since," Begay wrote. "Some people did not survive like me. They are walking traumas of my generation."

## 11. Sonya Kelliher-Combs

[Kelliher-Combs](#) is a Nome mixed-media painter and sculptor whose work is intensely personal and intimate. In it, she uses both organic and synthetic materials, creating abstract works that call to mind hair, skin and teeth that remind the viewer not only of the things that make us unique, but that we share.

"Through mixed media painting and sculpture I offer a chronicle of the ongoing struggle for self-definition and identity in the Alaskan context," Kelliher-Combs said in her [artist's statement](#).

She's interested especially in the physical, surface-level interactions with culture and society, especially in the Native and Western context. Her use of organic materials is more than a representation of cultural dichotomies; it's an almost metaphorical representation of this cultural skin.

**Direct Link:** <http://mic.com/articles/127677/11-native-american-artists-whose-work-redefines-what-it-means-to-be-american>

# Native American Rights Fund in Boulder notes 45 years of legal service

**John Echohawk, first graduate of the University of New Mexico's program to train American Indian lawyers, founded the organization.**

**By Tom McGhee**

**The Denver Post**

Posted: 11/03/2015 12:01:00 AM MST [Add a Comment](#) | Updated: a day ago



The Native American Rights Fund, founded by John Echohawk, above, is celebrating its 45th anniversary. Since 1970, the fund has helped tribes across the country enforce treaty rights. (*Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post*)

John Echohawk was working for California Indian Legal Services in 1970 when the Ford Foundation provided a grant to start a pilot program to provide legal services to American Indians on a national level.

The program led to formation of the Boulder-based Native American Rights Fund, to preserve tribal sovereign governments; protect land, water and hunting and fishing rights; assure voting rights; and hold governments accountable to American Indians.

Echohawk, a Pawnee and the first graduate of the University of New Mexico's special program to train American Indian lawyers, jumped at the chance to work on the project.

Along with other attorneys and tribal members, he established NARF, modeling it on the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund and other civil rights legal organizations.

The organization has pursued cases in Colorado and across the country from a former fraternity house in Boulder for 45 years. From Thursday through Saturday, NARF will celebrate its 45th anniversary with events including a benefit concert and gala dinner.

"It was the time of the civil rights movement, and we all saw how the courts were making a big difference in bringing justice to minorities and poor people. We saw what was being done by the NAACP, which was basically a national defense fund for African-Americans, and thought, wouldn't it be nice if we could get something like that going" for Indians, said Echohawk, NARF executive director.

"NARF is clearly one of the most prominent Indian organizations that has represented tribes and individuals in very current and relevant cases," said Helen Padilla, director of the American Indian Law Center in New Mexico.

Among cases handled in the organization's early days was a lawsuit against Colorado and Fort Lewis College that guaranteed Indian students a free education at the school, Echohawk said.

The land on which the college was located was originally an Army base outside Durango and the site of an Indian school. When the school was turned over to Colorado for a college, a condition of the transfer was free tuition for Indians.

As the number of Indian students grew, the state became concerned about the cost and began charging them tuition.

NARF joined with a Denver firm and sued, and a federal judge ruled free tuition for American Indians was a binding obligation.

Fort Lewis, which has since moved into Durango, "now has more Native American students than any other college or university in the country," Echohawk said.



John Echohawk, right, works with Katrina Mora, administrative assistant, and Ray Martinez, corporate secretary and grant writer, in Boulder. (*Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post*)

In September, NARF reached a settlement in a case brought by indigenous Alaska plaintiffs who argued the state's voting information materials were badly translated and violated the federal Voting Rights Act.

It was the second time NARF had sued over the materials provided to the tribes, said Ray Ramirez, NARF corporate secretary and grant writer. "I don't think we will have to sue again. I think the state finally got it."

NARF is presently part of a coalition working to raise awareness of the federal government's efforts following the Civil War to force tribal members to adapt to white America's culture.

As part of President Ulysses Grant's 1869 Peace Policy, Indian children were forcefully taken from their families and placed in boarding schools run by Christian denominations.

They were punished for speaking their native languages, banned from dressing in traditional clothing and taught that their cultures were evil, Ramirez said.

They often were neglected and psychologically and sexually abused, Ramirez said. When they returned to their tribes, many of them were broken people.

The trauma they endured at the schools, which operated into the 1950s, led to alcoholism, domestic abuse and other problems that continue to plague Indian communities today, Ramirez said.

Remedies could include some funding for programs to address the issues, Ramirez said. "Hopefully, enough people out there in the general population will support our efforts and write to Congress and ask them to recognize what this policy did, the cultural genocide it caused."

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**Direct Link:** [http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci\\_29062110/native-american-rights-fund-boulder-notes-45-years](http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_29062110/native-american-rights-fund-boulder-notes-45-years)

## **Group helping Montana's Native Americans heal over time**

By Jill Valley

*Nov 03, 2015 6:49 PM MST*



Missoula center program helping healing (MTN News photo)

Montana has one of the largest Native American populations in the country, as well as seven reservations across the state.

But it is a population dealing with pain, and still trying to reconnect with itself after decades of oppression and grief.

"The smoke it is taking away my from taking my my prayers and what I'm thinking to the creator ." Cleansing with sage is how Eric Thomas starts and ends his day. He's part of the Gros Ventre and Oneida tribes. He's raising children, going to school and looking to the future while remembering the past.

"And some of those aspects of my life that has happened to me when I was a kid, I didn't really connect him with what happened to my ancestors. And now I can make that connection," he said.

There's a group called Mending Broken Hearts at the Missoula Urban Indian Health Center.

"This group acknowledges the historical trauma and unresolved grief in the Many Broken Hearts Group," said Kathy Little Leaf.

It's a grief and loss recovery group that focuses on educating and healing Native American historical intergenerational trauma. It focuses on the Boarding School Era, a time in history that broke up families and suppressed and disrupted an entire culture, and still does.

It's a well documented phenomenon contributing to behavioral, emotional, physical, and spiritual issues. "You only need to look to the emotions of sadness you know they can run to generation unconsciously," explained Mary Place, an adjunct professor at Walla Walla University.

Dustin Monroe is Blackfeet and Assiniboiné, and is changing the future of Native Americans. He a UM student working toward his Ph.D in medical anthropology.

When he was a child, a white teacher told him to stop talking like an Indian, and that may have silenced him for a while, but no longer. He's founded a nonprofit group called Native Generational Change in an effort to find and foster new Native American leaders.

He believes that part of that is teaching about all of Native American history.

"This generation is a whole new generation. We're getting educated, and coming into today's society and sharing our culture and relearning our culture, so you have culture and language revitalization," Monroe explained.

And Thomas is also part of that change by bravely changing the narrative of his own future.

"Our warriors consist of our young men going to college or young men get education in our young man progress and I want to send him something greater. I want to be the presents to people to show them that that's the way it was just not the way it has to be," he said.

This Wednesday and Thursday, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the University of Montana are hosting a symposium on historical trauma, talking about Native American and African American trauma and the impact of war on children, and much more.

It's at UM's University Center and is open to the public but you do need to register. [Click here](#) to sign up for the event.

***Below is a brief description of the symposium:***

*The Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the University of Montana's African-American Studies program are convening a symposium on historical trauma Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 4-5, at UM. The interdisciplinary program will explore emerging Holocaust research on historical trauma, as well as current research on the topic in Native American studies, African-American studies and women's, gender and sexuality studies.*

*Sara Horowitz, professor of comparative literature at York University, will deliver a keynote address titled "The Inheritance of Trauma across the Disciplines: A View from Holocaust Studies" at 3:45 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 4, in UM's University Center.*

*The symposium also will feature four panel discussions that will consist of scholars and professors from the region as well as across the U.S. delivering papers on victim- and survivor-centered histories of trauma, the impact of trauma on children in the wake of war, the psychological effects of the boarding school system in contemporary Native American communities, legal responses to trauma, and how histories of trauma unfold in the realm of gender and sexuality.*

*UM President Royce Engstrom and Robert M. Ehrenreich, director of University Programs at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Mandel Center, will*

*offer opening remarks. Participants on the closing roundtable will discuss with the symposium's audience how these issues are addressed in the classroom.*

**Direct Link:** <http://www.krtv.com/story/30424589/group-helping-montanas-native-americans-heal-over-time>

## **Keystone XL: Indigenous Opponents Call for Rejection Despite TransCanada Halt Request**

[ICTMN Staff](#)

11/3/15

Indigenous environmental leaders opposing TransCanada Corp.'s Keystone XL pipeline said that the company's request for the U.S. government to "pause" its evaluation of the controversial project was nothing more than a political ploy ahead of the 2016 Presidential election.

"We see this as a last ditch effort for the TransCanada corporation to avoid a rejection of its presidential permit application and is a clear stall strategy that hopes for a supportive President from the 2016 elections," said Indigenous Environmental Network Executive Director [Tom Goldtooth in a statement](#) on November 3. "This dirty tar sands pipeline has met immense organized resistance from the Dene and Cree First Nations and the Métis community at its source, through the traditional lands and territories of the Oceti Sakowin, also known as the Great Sioux Nation, and from the Ponca people of the southern Great Plains. The mobilization of tribal nations and the Native grassroots and youth, coupled with alliances with non-native landowners, helped the fight against Keystone XL pipeline become the marquee fight for the U.S. climate justice movement."

TransCanada announced on Monday November 2 that it had sent a [letter to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry](#) asking him to halt its evaluation pending the resolution of legal issues in Nebraska over which route the pipeline should take.

"We are asking State to pause its review of Keystone XL based on the fact that we have applied to the Nebraska Public Service Commission for approval of its preferred route in the state," said TransCanada President and Chief Executive Officer Russ Girling [in a statement](#). "I note that when the status of the Nebraska pipeline route was challenged last year, the State Department found it appropriate to suspend its review until that dispute was resolved. We feel under the current circumstances a similar suspension would be appropriate."

The \$8 billion Keystone XL pipeline system would carry 800,000 or more barrels per day of oil from the Alberta oil sands in Canada to the Gulf of Mexico coast in Texas.



Numerous legal challenges and protests, as well as falling oil prices and cost overruns, have impeded the project for years.

In Nebraska, the process has been snagged by a legal battle over whether then Governor Dave Heineman had the authority to approve the route when he did so in 2013. Court challenges to his approval of the route and TransCanada's right to exercise eminent domain over landowners along it resulted in a February 2014 ruling that the law allowing the move violated the state constitution.

In the decision, Lancaster County Judge Stephanie Stacy said that the power to determine the route rests with the Nebraska Public Service Commission.

"TransCanada made the decision to apply to the Nebraska Public Service Commission (PSC) following legal challenges in the state over the constitutionality of the statute under which Governor Heineman approved the route in 2013," TransCanada said in its statement on November 2.

"It is anticipated that route approval by the PSC would take seven to 12 months to complete," TransCanada wrote in its letter to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry requesting the suspension of the review in the wake of its October 5 filing with the Nebraska commission.

Given that timeline TransCanada said, it would be "appropriate" to put the federal review on hold until the entire route is confirmed. But Keystone XL opponents said the pipeline should be rejected regardless of the company's request.

"It's important to note that TransCanada has no authority to suspend the federal government's decision making process for Keystone XL," said the [Natural Resources Defense Council](#) in a statement. "TransCanada can only make a case to the State Department to delay its decision, and the case it makes is a poor one."

White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest [said on November 2](#), just before TransCanada's request, that President Barack Obama would make a decision before leaving office in January 2017. The White House did not comment after the company made its announcement, according to the [Associated Press](#). Democratic Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton has gone on record opposing the pipeline, as have her same-party opponents, while Republicans support it, AP noted.

Bold Nebraska, the anti-Keystone XL group at the forefront of opposition in that state, said the route issue was not new enough to be the company's actual motivation, invoking tribal concerns as well.

"The route in Nebraska has been uncertain for years," said Bold Nebraska director Jane Kleeb in a statement. "The only difference now is TransCanada knows they are about to have their permit rejected, so they are scrambling. President Obama can end all of this uncertainty with the stroke of a pen. It is time to reject and give farmers, ranchers and

Tribal Nations peace of mind that their land and water is protected from this risky pipeline.”

The Indigenous Environmental Network reemphasized grassroots Native opposition to the pipeline project and its impingement on sacred places.

“Tribal Nations of the Oceti Sakowin have reiterated their opposition to the KXL pipeline in defense of their ancestral homelands, including but not limited to the territory of the Great Sioux Nation, as recognized in the Fort Laramie Treaties of 1851 and 1868,” Goldtooth said in the group’s statement. “Standing in solidarity with tribal governments and traditional treaty councils of the Oceti Sakowin, we ask the State Department to refuse TransCanada’s request to delay this application and ask President Obama to take the opportunity to reject this pipeline once and for all!”

*Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/11/03/keystone-xl-indigenous-opponents-call-rejection-despite-transcanada-halt-request-162297>*

## **Indigenous Leaders Discuss 'Doctrine of Discovery'**

POSTED: 10:21 PM CST Nov 02, 2015

Indigenous Leaders Discuss 'Doctrine of Discovery'  
DULUTH, Minn. -

Local indigenous leaders started the conversation about the Doctrine of Discovery and how they say Columbus' legacy is impacting us today.

“It affects everything from the food we eat, to the air we breathe, to the water, to the land, to the soil that you use to grow your crops, to slaughtering all of the wildlife for profit. Let's just call it blood money,” said Lisa Carol Herthel, a Sokaogon Chippewa Community leader.

In a Monday night gathering at the Central Hillside Community Center, leaders said we need to start unifying as people and helping each other.

This discussion is the third meeting of a study circle supported by the Oreck-Alpern Foundation.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.fox21online.com/news/local-news/indigenous-leaders-discuss-doctrine-of-discovery/36222444>

# Brazil Indians resume fight for rights following World Indigenous Games

Published November 03, 2015

[EFE](#)

By Alba Santandreu

Brazilian Indians, following the truce declared during the first World Indigenous Games, held here, have now resumed their struggle to recover their ancestral lands, obtain decent health care and education, and put an end to the runaway deforestation of their reserves.

The vulnerability of the Guarani-Kiowa community, in the southern state of Mato Grosso do Sul, again spotlights the insecurity in which some of the 300-plus Brazilian ethnicities live.

"Some Guaranis camp out on roadsides exposed to the cold and rain. The National Indian Foundation gives them their basic food ration, but it's not enough to last a whole month," according to Sara Sanchez of the Indigenous Missionary Council, or Cimi, a commission linked to Brazil's Catholic bishops conference.

For decades the Guarani have opposed land barons over territories on the border with Paraguay, claiming them to be the sacred lands of their ancestors from which they were violently expelled.

The Guarani people, who want 39 areas staked out for their own use, denounce the increasing aggression of landowners and the overcrowding of its population.

"There's a lack of space and that is causing deaths. We suffer hunger because we don't have the conditions to produce anything," Eliseu Lopes of the Guarani-Kiowa people told EFE.

Other indigenous communities, despite having their reserves officially demarcated, are suffering the illegal exploitation of the natural resources on their land, which in any case are growing scarce as a consequence of increasing deforestation and the encroachment of agribusiness.

"Deforestation is causing fires to burn our territories. The river is beginning to dry up and fish are disappearing," Auakamu, leader of the Kamayura ethnicity, said.

The Kamayura were one of the 24 Brazilian ethnicities that took part for nine days in the first World Indigenous Games, which ended Saturday in Palmas after bringing together some 2,000 Indians from a score of countries.

Most of the Brazilian peoples who took part in the games have their lands officially demarcated, but they complain of constant problems in the areas of education and health care.

"Basic care is a right but we don't have it. Government ministries have a contempt for our people," Milton, a Bororo Indian, said.

According to the Cimi, health is "extremely vulnerable" in the indigenous communities, and the mortality rate among children of some ethnicities, like the Xavante, is more than 800 percent higher than the national average for non-indigenous youngsters.

"Indians' rights are undermined in health, education and land," Sanchez said.

In his opinion, the situation among indigenous communities could get even worse if a constitutional amendment is passed that transfers authority to set the boundaries of reserves from the executive branch to Congress, where agricultural interests have enormous influence.

Some Brazilian ethnicities have already warned that if Congress passes that bill, "blood will be spilled" in Brazil, where some 817,000 Indians live, or 0.4 percent of the population. EFE

**Direct Link:** <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2015/11/03/brazil-indians-resume-fight-for-rights-following-world-indigenous-games/>

## **Ojibwe professor Anton Treuer discusses Native American oppression during a talk at Ohio University**

[Anton Treuer](#)



Anton Treuer, a specialist in the Ojibwe Language and American Indian Studies and a professor of Ojibwe at Bemidji State University, spoke in Baker Theatre on Tuesday evening. He came in light of Native American Indian Heritage Month and addressed Indian stereotypes and presented his book *Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians but were Afraid to Ask*.

Posted: Tuesday, November 3, 2015 9:45 pm | *Updated: 10:56 pm, Tue Nov 3, 2015.*

Alex Darus | For The Post

Anton Treuer enlightened a full audience in Baker Theatre with personal stories and opinions about oppression and the history of Native Americans.

Treuer, an Ojibwe professor at Bemidji State University, led a discussion titled, “Everything You Wanted To Know About Indians but Were Afraid to Ask,” which gave students the opportunity to ask Treuer questions about any topics relating to Native Americans.

In honor of Native American Heritage Month, the Multicultural Center and the Black Student Cultural Programming Board booked Treuer as the keynote speaker for November.

Treuer began the discussion by introducing himself in the Ojibwe language to make a statement about how English is a foreign language.

Treuer, who is a part of the Ojibwe tribe, also made the disclaimer that he does not expect one white person to speak on behalf of the entire white population and the same should go with his own opinions as one Native American man because there are a wide range of opinions about different topics throughout Native American culture.

“None of us see the world the way it is,” Treuer said. “We see the world as we are.”

Treuer said the main issue with the way people view Native Americans is that their culture is romanticized while also being stereotyped as savages and that they are “so often imagined and so infrequently understood.”

That misunderstanding often stems from problems with the educational system, Treuer said. He added that many of the people who write history books on Native Americans have often never spoke to a Native American or gone to where they live.

Native Americans are often marginalized and invisible, both to the non-native population and to themselves, Treuer said, which is a result of years of oppression. One example he used is that white heroes in American history are commonly known, but it is unlikely the majority of the white population knows the names of Native American heroes.

He commented that many people do not know the history of where non-Native Americans live, which makes it easy for people to be oblivious about the destruction of the world around them because it holds no historical or personal value.

The audience asked many questions, ranging from topics such as the racial issues with offensive sports teams' mascots and the historical significance of long hair in certain tribes.

One student asked about what white people can do to help the oppression of other cultures. Treuer answered by saying that white people need to be "color conscious" rather than "color blind" when it comes to other cultures, and that we all need to demand change and tackle oppression together.

"I thought the event went really well. I'm very happy we decided to bring him back, and I think our students walked away learning a lot more than they did before," Winsome Chunnu-Brayda, the associate director of the Multicultural Center, said.

Chunnu-Brayda added that she noticed the students in the audience had "contemplative" looks on their faces while Treuer was speaking.

"It was a lot different than I expected," Alli Blunt, a senior studying communication, said. "It was really accepting and open. He had a lot of different stories and insight to share. I didn't expect it to be so good. It was really inspiring."

**Direct Link:** [http://www.thepostathens.com/culture/ojibwe-professor-anton-treuer-discusses-native-american-oppression-during-a/article\\_19e34592-829e-11e5-a4df-0be6abf6d082.html](http://www.thepostathens.com/culture/ojibwe-professor-anton-treuer-discusses-native-american-oppression-during-a/article_19e34592-829e-11e5-a4df-0be6abf6d082.html)

## Should schools be able to carry Native American mascots?

Native American group questions school mascot WCNC

Bora Kim, WCNC 7:39 p.m. EST November 3, 2015



The debate over using Native American mascots in sports have been ongoing for many years.

But this week, the national conversation hit close to home, with two Gaston County high school mascots, the East Gaston Warriors and South Point Red Raiders, at the center of attention.

The online debate began when Chris Howell posted a letter he and fellow school board members received.

It was written by Shawn Greeson, a Native American, who also belongs to a local Native American group.

In the letter, Greeson asked the board how they intend to address the use of "blatantly offensive mascots".

The letter went on to say, students should not be allowed to wear "native-themed face paint," saying it's equivalent to "blackface"

Not everyone agrees.

"I think we have become a nation of offended. I'm sorry they feel that way and I think it is part of school spirit," said Bob Clay, whose grandchild attends South Point.

"I don't think anybody is trying to offend anybody," he said.

Greeson tells NBC Charlotte, he can't specifically comment about this posting for various reasons, but generally speaking, says certain images that negatively depict his heritage, and the behavior of some, is what is often the most offensive.

Greeson says local Native American groups widely praise the actions of CMS for doing away with Native American mascots, logos and nicknames.

He says the district's "progressive" action to remove the mascots was because CMS recognized the difficulty of governing inappropriate behavior among fans and supporters.

Board Member Chris Howell, who originally posted the letter on his Facebook page, says the response from the public has been in support of keeping the mascots.

As of today, there are no plans to bring the issue up for formal discussion before the school board.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.wcnc.com/story/news/local/2015/11/03/should-schools-be-able-to-carry-native-american-mascots/75121272/>



## Trudie Jackson speaks on awareness for Native American LGBT health care



Trudie Jackson (Navajo), a Graduate Student in American Indian Studies-Tribal Leadership & Governance of Arizona State University, speaks about her experiences of a transgender Native American to a group of students at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign on November 3, 2015.

By [Vivienne Henning](#) | 11/04/15 12:00am

When Trudie Jackson returned to school in 2009 to earn her degree in social work she realized the need to address LGBT health. As a case manager in the human service field, she was supposed to serve 15 clients but ended up with a caseload of over 24 clients.

Jackson, graduate student in American Indian Studies and Tribal Leadership and Governance at Arizona State University, is an advocate for proper health care rights for LGBT identifying Native Americans and spoke about the challenges they face at the Medical Services Building on Tuesday.

Native American and Alaskan Native health care has long been carried out by the Indian Health Services (IHS). But those who identify as LGBT have not received the same level of health care services as those who don't identify as LGBT.

Jackson represented the LGBT-identifying Native American community at the American Indian Physician Conference where she gave a presentation to the IHS director.

"I asked: When is the IHS going to take strong, critical matters into addressing the increasing number of HIV/AIDS patients in Native Americans within the country?" Jackson said. "If it impacts your family, your immediate family, will it finally be addressed? Because we are losing American Indians who are asking for help with HIV/AIDS."

Another barrier to the Native American LGBT community is the concept of having access to proper healthcare and outlets to speak and raise awareness in urban versus rural environments, as many of these sessions are in Washington or IHS headquarters in Maryland.

"LGBT Native Americans or Alaskan Natives may not have the money or the resources to travel to the East Coast to have their voices heard," Jackson said. "I'm hoping that with these sessions that the IHS will seriously look at developing and implementing LGBT clinics at all IHS sites across the country, so LGBT care can be provided to all American Indians and Alaskan Native."

Jackson also voiced how at times she is the only Native American LGBT representative working with community partners in Phoenix on raising awareness.

"If you're sincere about your community, raise your voice so your population is heard because you may be the only voice in the room for your community," she said. "But that voice is powerful because when you get that funding for your population, you're doing a service to your community to help get outreach and prevention education for the population that you're advocating for."

She also spoke about the importance of frontline workers being sensitive and open-minded when reaching out to Native American communities with LGBT individuals.

"The frontline workers, the people that do community outreach, are the ones that really hold the key to the community because they interact with the community," Jackson said. "When they build that trust with the LGBT community individuals will share that name within their circle."

Similarly, Jackson stressed the importance of proper training for health care providers in interacting with LGBT patients.

"When you walk into a patient's room and they may appear different compared to what's on the chart, always ask how they would like to be addressed," Jackson said. "That is the

key because that will make the patient aware that you are open-minded and that you are non-judgmental in the LGBT community.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.dailyillini.com/article/2015/11/trudie-jackson-speaks-on-awareness-for-native-american-lgbt-health-care>

## **NDN-Created Internet: Staying Connected this Native American Heritage Month**

[Ada Claire](#)

11/4/15

Columbus Day has passed and Native American Heritage Month is upon us, serving as an external reminder that we have a distinct voice among the cacophony of the mainstream. It's a time of the year when the rest of the country is more likely to pay attention to its first people and recognize that we're still here, but where are we exactly? If you're reading this, you're obviously online.

Outside of our own communities, indigenous circles can be really small. The global village can be both too close to home inside of our own social media space and a lonely place where it's easy to get disconnected from where you come from. However, community, tradition, and modernity aren't mutually exclusive choices: Technology can be a bridge connecting all three.

At [Reddit](#), a user-created content site that brands itself as “the Front Page of the Internet,” Native Americans, First Nations, and other indigenous people of the Western Hemisphere created a political, cultural, and community space of our own at </r/IndianCountry>.

We started-out as a handful of Native American redditors who wanted more than another barebones Native American subpage. We wanted tribal flair (to rep our nations), moderation to ensure quality and civility, cosmetic improvements and functionality, a hub of links to Native American resources, and user engagement. Within days, we provided all five. A year later, [we outperform the competition](#) despite being [one-fifth the size](#). In March, [ICTMN highlighted](#) our online language preservation efforts and [they](#) are [ongoing](#).



Ada Claire is the host of the Digital Powwow podcast.

We will not be idle for Native American Heritage Month. We invite you to attend our hosted AMAs (Ask Me Anything), where the guest will be available to chat and answer your questions in real-time:

November 4 at noon: Joey Montoya: Founder of Urban Native Era, Indig. Clothing Company

November 7 at noon: Jackie Malstrom: Indigenous Radio Host

November 11 at noon: Nataanii Means: Activist, Rapper, Son of Russell Means

November 12 at 1 p.m.: Greg Grey Cloud: Indigenous Activist

November 14 at noon: Mosiah Salazar Bluecloud: Kickapoo Language Instructor

November 18 at noon: Ryan Red Corn: Satirist/Comedian of the 1491s

November 25 at noon: Rashaun Nez: Dreamstarter Grant Winner, Founder of Warrior Progressions Fitness

November 28 at noon: Layha Spoonhunter: LGBTQ/Two Spirit Activist

The following ongoing community discussions are also scheduled:

November 8: Native Civilization: Society, Culture, and Tech

November 15: Native Genocide: The War Continues

November 22: Native Language Revitalization: Saving Our Culture


November 29: Native Art: From Traditional to Modern

With peer contributions we intend to empower users and visitors to engage their communities and provide them with the tools to make the offline world what they want it

to be. We hope to help keep community connections strong and make the Native American/First Nations online presence stronger. You don't have to go alone, and you know where to find us. Thank you.

**YOU CAN FIND US ONLINE:**  
REDDIT.COM/R/INDIANCOUNTRY  
FACEBOOK.COM/INDIANCOUNTRYREDDIT  
TWITTER.COM/R\_INDIANCOUNTRY  
**DROP BY OR CHAT ANYTIME**

**FEATURED R/IC SHOWS:**  
**#realNDNtalk**  
*Learn Your Native Language or  
Learn Right Along With Us*  
**The Digital PowWow**  
*Podcast Focused on Modern Life  
as an Indigenous Person*



**MANY NATIONS  
ONE COMMUNITY**

Reddit Indian Country Banner

*/u/ Opechan (Kiros Auld), /u/ snorecalypse (Donovan Pete), /u/ La\_Diablo (Laura Molina), /u/ Snapshot52, /u/ whiskeydeltatango, /u/ ladyeesti (Ada Claire), moderation team at [/r/IndianCountry](https://www.reddit.com/r/IndianCountry).*

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/11/04/ndn-created-internet-staying-connected-native-american-heritage-month-162303>

## Adidas offers to help eliminate Native American mascots



Adidas has announced an initiative to help high schools nationwide drop Native American mascots.

The German athletic shoe and apparel maker says it will offer free design resources to schools looking to shelve Native American mascots, nicknames, imagery or symbolism. The company also pledges to provide financial support to ensure the cost of changing is not prohibitive.

It asked high schools interested in making the change to contact the company via email.

Adidas announced the initiative in conjunction with the White House Tribal Nations Conference on Thursday in Washington. Adidas executives were among those attending the conference, which includes leaders from the 567 federally recognized tribes.

Adidas has offered free design resources and financial support as part of an initiative to help high schools shelve Native American mascots, nicknames, imagery or symbolism. *Hannah Foslien/Getty Images*

According to the group Change the Mascot, there are about 2,000 schools nationwide that have Native American mascots.

"The growing movement to end the use of Native American mascots, particularly the dictionary-defined R-word slur, is surging forward all across the nation," Change the Mascot said in a statement.

Eric Liedtke, Adidas head of global brands who traveled to conference, said sports must be inclusive.

"Today's announcement is a great way for us to offer up our resources to schools that want to do what's right -- to administrators, teachers, students and athletes who want to make a difference in their lives and in their world," Liedtke said in a statement to The Associated Press. "Our intention is to help break down any barriers to change -- change that can lead to a more respectful and inclusive environment for all American athletes."

The voluntary program would give schools access to the company's design team for logo redesign and uniform design across all sports. It seeks to be a collaborative effort with schools.

The use of such mascots has drawn increased attention and controversy in recent years. The NFL's [Washington Redskins](#) have resisted appeals by Native American and civil rights groups to change their name and mascot.

In 2005, the NCAA warned schools that they would face sanctions if they didn't change Native American logos or nicknames. Some colleges kept their nicknames by obtaining permission from tribes, including the [Florida State Seminoles](#) and the University of [Utah Utes](#).

Some states have taken action at the high school level. Last month California Gov. Jerry Brown signed a law that prohibits schools from using the term "Redskins."



Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper recently ordered the creation of a commission to study the use of Native American mascots and come up with a list of recommendations for possible legislation

In Oregon, the state Board of Education in 2012 ordered high schools to ban such mascots or risk losing public funding. The schools have until 2017 to comply.

"High school social identities are central to the lives of young athletes, so it's important to create a climate that feels open to everyone who wants to compete," Adidas president Mark King said in a statement. "But the issue is much bigger. These social identities affect the whole student body and, really, entire communities.

"In many cities across our nation, the high school and its sports teams take center stage in the community and the mascot and team names become an everyday rallying cry."

*The Associated Press contributed to this report.*

**Direct Link:** [http://espn.go.com/moresports/story/\\_/id/14057043/adidas-offers-help-eliminate-native-american-mascots](http://espn.go.com/moresports/story/_/id/14057043/adidas-offers-help-eliminate-native-american-mascots)

## **Stanford to show Little Bighorn drawings by Red Horse, a Native American artist in the fight**



A scene from the Battle of the Little Bighorn drawn by Red Horse, a Lakota Sioux chief who fought in the battle. It's one of a dozen drawings that will be shown in an exhibition at Stanford University, picked from the 42 that Red Horse created from memory five years after the 1876 battle.

There's no lack of visual impressions of the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

One is dashing Errol Flynn valiantly leading his men to their doom in black and white in "They Died With Their Boots On," a film that, quite contrary to the historical record,



depicted George Armstrong Custer as sympathetic to the Native American tribes he fought.

Arthur Penn's acidly antiheroic view of the battle in the film "Little Big Man" shows Custer lapsing into an insane fantasy on the battlefield. An arrow ends the dandified general's megalomaniacal raving just as he's about to shoot wounded cavalryman Dustin Hoffman in the head.

But perhaps the most important and reliable visual record of June 25, 1876, comes from someone who was there: Red Horse, a Lakota Sioux chief who, drawing from memory five years after the fighting, used colored pencils and manila paper to create a suite of 42 unsparing images chronicling the horrific battle in which he'd fought.

A dozen of the drawings from the "Red Horse Pictographic Account of the Battle of the Little Bighorn" will leave their usual repository at the Smithsonian Institution's National Anthropological Archives in Washington, D.C., and go on display Jan. 16 to May 9 at [Stanford University](#)'s Cantor Arts Center.

The Cantor's announcement of the exhibition Wednesday said it's the first time a representative selection of these works has been displayed together since 1976, when the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery put on the exhibition "Keep the Last Bullet for Yourself: The Fight at Little Bighorn."

A Smithsonian publication from June 1976 described it as "a small show" timed to the battle's 100th anniversary. Also on display were Custer's buckskin coat and battle flag and the last message he sent before making his last stand. Custer rode into battle after dividing his Seventh Cavalry into three groups, aiming to encircle an Indian encampment along the Little Bighorn River in what's now South Dakota. Instead, a vastly superior force led by Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse attacked, and the unit Custer led was wiped out.

Jake Homiak, director of the Anthropology Collections and Archives at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, said Wednesday that, to his knowledge, only three of [Red Horse's drawings](#) previously had been loaned for display outside the Smithsonian.

The coming show springs from a sophomore seminar course at Stanford called the Face of Battle, in which political science professor Scott Sagan, borrowing the title from a celebrated book by the British military historian John Keegan, tries to give students a sense of what warfare is like for the combatants themselves. He uses Gettysburg and Little Bighorn as case studies. Students travel to both battlefields as part of their classwork, and Sagan also brings them to the Smithsonian to see Red Horse's drawings and discuss their meaning with JoAllyn Archambault, director of the American Indian Program at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Sagan said by email that he and two collaborators from Stanford picked the dozen drawings “for both aesthetic and pedagogical reasons. These drawings are both emotionally powerful and representative of the chronology of the battle.”

W. Richard West Jr., president of the Autry Museum of the American West, said he would love to develop an exhibition around Red Horse’s drawings -- if the Smithsonian proves willing to let the delicate works travel again after the Stanford show.

“I think it’s remarkable that they have assembled these, and I’m just delighted they’ve done this,” said West, whose southern Cheyenne great-grandfather, Thunder Bull, was a teenaged combatant at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. (West proudly points out that, while most of the Indians in the fight were Sioux, the Cheyenne were part of the allied force and “we consider ourselves the elite corps of the Little Bighorn.”)

“It’s a gem of an exhibition and a gem of an idea,” West said, because the show will come at the Red Horse drawings from varied perspectives of art history, military history and Native American culture.

West said Red Horse’s drawings are not the only eyewitness artworks depicting the battle, but “it’s fair to say it’s one of a kind because of their quality, detail and size.”

By 1881, Red Horse was living at the Cheyenne River Agency, a reservation in South Dakota, where a U.S. Army doctor, Charles McChesney, asked him to draw the Battle of the Little Bighorn from memory.

The works are part of a genre called ledger drawings, created in the late 1800s by Native American artists who repurposed paper from blank ledgers used by businesses and tradespeople in the West. Red Horse’s drawings are about 2 feet high and 3 feet long.

West said Native American artists who did ledger drawings simply were making use of the materials at hand to continue a traditional form of pictorial accounts of historic events that previously had been done on surfaces such as buffalo hide.

The Autry owns two depictions of the Battle of the Little Bighorn done on muslin by Native American veterans of the fight: an 1890 drawing and watercolor by [White Swan](#), a Crow tribesman who was there as a scout for the Seventh Cavalry, and an [1898 painting](#) of the corpse-strewn aftermath by Kicking Bear, done at the request of the artist Frederic Remington. It’s on display in the Autry’s exhibition “Empire and Liberty: the Civil War and the West.”

The drawings by Red Horse include vivid action scenes from the heat of battle, as well as pictures of the terrible aftermath -- drawings devoted separately to slain Indians, slaughtered horses and dead cavalymen stripped of uniforms that became the spoils of battle.

The most triumphant images show the victors chasing or leading away their most prized booty: the cavalry horses that survived. In one remarkable battle scene, two American flags hang upside down from the lances of fallen U.S. soldiers.

Red Horse's 12 drawings will have a gallery of their own at the Cantor Arts Center, Sagan said, augmented nearby by contemporary Native American art and other pieces that are being chosen by Sarah Sadlier, a Stanford senior who took his the course two years ago and became the exhibition's research assistant. She has a personal as well as a scholarly connection: She's a member of the Minneconjou band of the Lakota Sioux, the same branch as Red Horse, and one of her ancestors was an interpreter for Sitting Bull.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/culture/la-et-cm-battle-little-bighorn-stanford-red-horse-drawings-20151104-story.html>

## 3 things to know when buying Native American rarities

Erik Hoyer, Special for The Republic | azcentral.com 5 a.m. MST November 5, 2015

### Collecting Treasures: Some people object to the sale of such items



Recently, we auctioned a consignor's collection of Native American rarities and took some heat for it. The collection included arrowheads, beaded moccasins, bannerstones, pots, vessels, bowls and more.

As an auctioneer, I have a fiduciary responsibility to sell a consignor's property. And, I also take my legal responsibility for selling items to bidders seriously. Our consignor signed a contract stating that he owned the property free and clear from any claims, liens or other encumbrances and had full authority and lawful power to sell the items without any violation of any federal, state or other laws or regulations.

Like auction houses worldwide, many of our auctions include Native American pieces, and we're seeing more of it since Baby Boomers are downsizing and selling off their collections.

Rare, original Native American pieces can break records at auction houses worldwide. In 2012, a Navajo "Chantland Blanket," a First-Phase chief's wearing blanket, realized \$1.8 million at auction in California.

In our case, with many of the items in this recent auction, we could not verify the time periods and we stated that clearly in our catalog descriptions. The items that did the best included a bird mourning effigy stone pipe appearing to be from the Mississippian period that sold for \$700 and a steatite platform pipe appearing to be from the Woodland period that sold for \$750.

There were still some people who objected to the sale of the items, and quite a bit of confusion about the laws surrounding the sale.



A steatite platform pipe appearing to be from the Woodland period recently sold for \$750 at EJ's Auction & Consignment. (Photo: Garrett Hoyer)

Here are three things to consider before buying Native American rarities — whether at auction or anywhere else:

1. **Understand the laws:** The United States has strict laws protecting cultural resources. The Archaeological Resources Protection Act, 16 U.S.C. § 470aa-470mm, was enacted Oct. 31, 1979 "to protect irreplaceable archaeological

- resources and sites on federal, public, and Indian lands.” The removal of Native American relics is not permitted in these areas, and in fact, you can be prosecuted and spend time incarcerated for simply removing a stone the size of a marble from a protected site. Private property, however, does permit removing items, but of course you must have the permission of the landowner. Human burial remains are federally protected, regardless of who owns the land on which they are found.
2. **Check provenance:** Check the history of ownership, appraisal records, documentation from historical boards and any other evidence that backs up an item’s authenticity. The more solid the provenance, the more valuable the piece will be.
  3. **Examine craftsmanship and condition:** Not only are you looking to see how well an item stood the test of time, you also want to beware of fakes or reproductions.

In the auction business, many times we’re selling a piece of history from cultures around the world. Collectors who buy these items do so because they appreciate the craftsmanship and history behind each amazing piece. We celebrate that.

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.azcentral.com/story/entertainment/home/contributor/2015/11/05/3-things-know-when-buying-native-american-rarities/75122400/>

## **Native American offended by Redskins wore blackface**

By [David K. Li](#)

November 4, 2015 | 4:08pm

A Native American leader at the forefront of efforts to ban the “racist” Washington Redskins team name dressed up in blackface for Halloween, according to a report.

Terry Rambler, chairman of the San Carlos Apache Tribe in Arizona, posted a Facebook picture of himself as reggae legend Bob Marley, [according to the Independent Journal](#).

“I had fun tonight at the Bylas Halloween Carnival,” he wrote of a picture of himself flashing a peace sign and wearing a dreadlocks wig with blackface makeup.

“I joined up with the Bylas Wellness Program and gave out information & candy and set up a ring toss booth. It was so awesome seeing the happy and enthusiastic faces of our children.”

Several of Rambler’s Facebook friends chimed in and chastised him about the get-up. He hasn’t immediately responded.

**Direct Link:** <http://nypost.com/2015/11/04/native-american-offended-by-redskins-wore-blackface-on-halloween/>

## **Anishinabe-Kwe in the House!**

[Mary Annette Pember](#)

11/3/15

Karen Diver, Chairwoman of the [Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa](#) in Minnesota, has just announced that she is stepping down from her long time position as tribal chairwoman and has accepted an appointment to serve at the White House as special assistant to President Barack Obama on Native American affairs.

Not bad for a woman who started out as a 15 year-old single mom struggling to educate herself while supporting her daughter.

Diver, a big advocate for self- sufficiency and advocacy for others, began working for the tribe in 2003 and was elected in 2007 as the first female leader of the Fond du Lac Band. A graduate of the University of Minnesota-Duluth, she also holds a master's degree in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

“I am excited by the opportunity to have a wider impact in Indian Country under President Obama’s Administration, which has shown unprecedented support for Indian Country,” she said in her letter to the tribe.

She also expressed her gratitude and faith to tribal members for their support of her leadership.

In the letter, she said that her last day will be November 13; Vice-Chairman Wally Depuis will likely serve as interim chair.

*Read more at* <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/11/03/anishinabe-kwe-house-162295>

## **Global climate-change policy must recognize indigenous rights**

[Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim](#)

November 05, 2015

In my country, the Republic of Chad, our land has been changing along with the climate, affecting how we support ourselves and produce our food. Areas that had once supported cattle grazing for generations have now become too dry, forcing nomadic herders from their traditional routes to new territories and altering long established land-use patterns. We now rank as a [world leader in hunger](#) and [conflict](#), an unsurprising tragedy that has taken place well off of the global stage.

But the economic sector that has played a leading role in climate change—the oil and gas industry—also competes for land in Chad, especially in the south of the country. Chadians, from all walks of life, including my Mbororo people, have had to accommodate this industry and bear witness to its environmental damages.

Several worlds away, in a series of international meetings under the auspices of the United Nations, delegates debate how to cope with climate change and reduce the emissions that cause it. The most recent meeting was in Bonn, Germany, at the end of Oct. 2015, and the series concludes with the global climate change mega-conference in Paris, France in early December.

At these meetings, I have been advocating for the recognition of our indigenous and traditional knowledge as part of any negotiated solution. This boils down to inserting language into the draft treaty that acknowledges the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities around the world, and in particular their right to own or manage the lands where they live.

The benchmark for my success so far has been the insertion of two paragraphs in a roughly 55-page document where just about every word is the subject of intense debate.

These paragraphs, and the words they contain, hold the key to our future. Without legal rights to our lands, resources, environment, and livelihoods, economic developments like oil drilling, mining, large-scale plantations, and hydropower projects will displace us. We need to be the ones deciding on the disposition of our lands.

We need to be the ones deciding on the disposition of our lands. And yet, more often than not, these rights are hard to come by. According to [new research](#) from the Rights and Resources Initiative, indigenous peoples and local communities lack the legal rights to almost three quarters of our lands.

Sustainable development is a buzzword at the international policymaking meetings, but for this jargon to have any meaning it must encompass respect for us and our priorities. Without this respect—which starts with our inclusion in any treaty coming out of Paris—the international community would replace one type of predatory economic development with another. And the impoverished peoples of the world—without legal rights—would continue to get pushed aside.

When we in Chad and elsewhere talk about land use and indigenous rights, oil drilling is one of the first problems we think about. And when we talk about climate change, the oil



and gas corporations are foremost among both the primary culprits and those most in denial.

Oil was supposed to be the economic hope that would stabilize landlocked Chad after decades of civil war. In a landmark deal with the World Bank, ExxonMobil, Petronas, and Chevron, oil wells and a pipeline through neighboring Cameroon were financed under the condition that the people and the environment would be protected, and the profits would be channeled towards services that raise the standard of living in the country.

But while the oil flowed smoothly through the pipeline, the profits did not reach the people impacted by the project. The government used the money to build its army instead. The World Bank protested and eventually withdrew from the arrangement, but only after the pipeline's completion.

The damage was done.

The results of this project have been ruinous. The loss of land and livelihoods has been unaddressed, and occasional leaks in the pipeline and the wells [have tainted the land](#), its character, and water resources. The pipeline itself, now that it is complete, has enabled the expansion of the oil fields and the continuing marginalization of my people.

The final insult is the current deliberations by the World Bank to potentially [lower the environmental and social safeguards](#) for its funded projects, when it is obvious to us in Chad that the previous safeguards were nowhere near strong enough.

We bear the brunt of the industries that pollute, and the lands that are left to us bear the brunt of the changing climate. Chad is not the only place where oil development has trampled our rights. Similar stories transpired in neighboring Nigeria, as well as in Ecuador on the other side of the world. Research has proven that [indigenous communities are the best stewards of the land](#), keeping billions of tons of carbon in the earth and out of our atmosphere. Yet we consistently get pushed aside for oil and gas development, the most carbon-intensive industry, while the world ponders and debates the urgent crisis of climate change.

Indigenous peoples and local communities are on the front lines of this crisis. We bear the brunt of the industries that pollute, and the lands that are left to us bear the brunt of the changing climate. We need to be compensated for losses and damages from extreme weather changes. We also need direct access to these funds as well as assistance that would allow us to govern our own development while maintaining our territories. We need to manage our own way forward.

Any final agreement that emerges out of Paris needs to be legally binding for all countries, with no room for any government—including my own in Chad—to wiggle out of its commitments. We don't need a contract on paper that acknowledges our existence but does not ensure our survival. It takes more than two paragraphs to address the

concerns of indigenous peoples and local communities. Instead, we hunger to see a contract of solutions, one that includes us and protects our rights and our future.

**Direct Link:** <http://qz.com/541700/global-climate-change-policy-must-recognize-indigenous-rights/>